The African Communist

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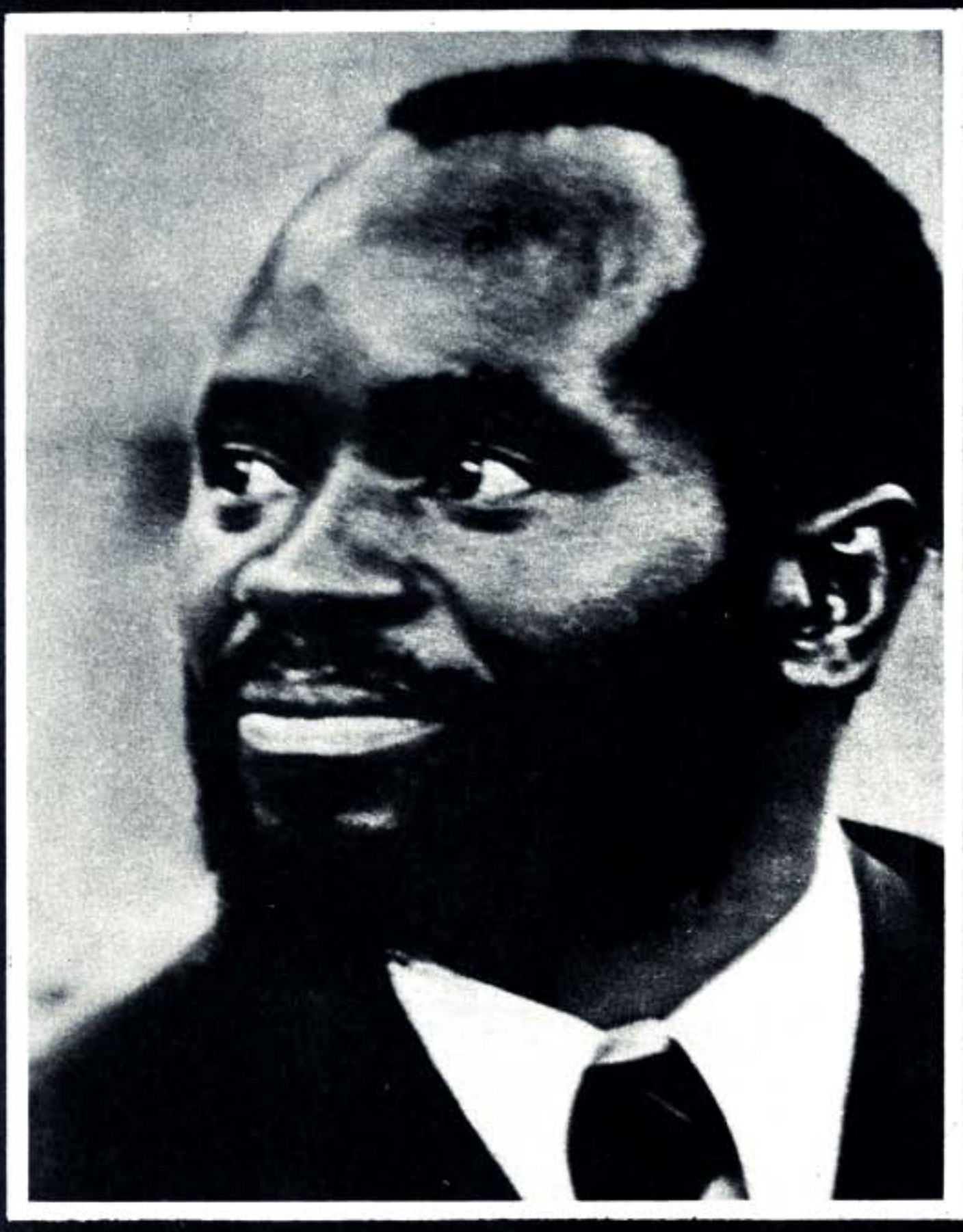

Frelimo President
SAMORA MACHEL

NOTE NEW PRICES FOR 1975

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THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

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OUR COVER PICTURE

FRELIMO President Samora Machel, born in Gaza province in southern Mozambique in 1933, learnt the lessons of colonial oppression early. His own grandfather had been wounded in earlier resistance to Portuguese occupation. His eldest brother was recruited for work in the South African gold mines and did not return. In 1950 land in the Gaza area was seized by the colonialists to make way for a fresh wave of white settlers and the Africans were moved to infertile areas, their villages destroyed without compensation. Samora Machel began his education at a mission school but found further studies blocked, and it was only after he started work that he was able to proceed with his secondary education, paying the fees out of his wages. As the resistance movement developed, Samora Machel left Mozambique in 1962, immediately underwent military training, and was in the army when FRELIMO opened its assault in 1964. He had risen to the rank of commander of the people's army when he was elected President of FRELIMO in 1969.

(Information from Mozambique: Sowing the Seeds of Revolution *published by the Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guine, London.)*

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Long Live Independent Mozambique!

The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party has sent the following letter to FRELIMO President Samora Machel.

On this momentous day – 25 June 1975 – the day on which Mozambique takes her rightful place in the community of independent sovereign nations, the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party warmly embraces the people of Mozambique and its revolutionary vanguard, FRELIMO. The assumption of power by FRELIMO and the installation of the People's Government of Mozambique marks an historic turning point.

After more than 500 years of colonial oppression, your people are once again free to determine their own destiny in the land of their fathers. The revolutionary struggles of the last decade have now laid the basis for fresh and exciting advances in the economic and political life of your newly independent state. The enemies of freedom and national independence have suffered a serious defeat at the hands of a people which proved yet again that modern armies and material resources are no match for mass-based revolutionary zeal and sacrifice. No doubt those forces who fear the advance of national liberation and

independence in Africa will not abandon their efforts to undermine this historic achievement. But the unity of the battle-tested Mozambican people and the strength and maturity of their unchallenged vanguard – FRELIMO – will undoubtedly crush any attempts to hold back the revolutionary sweep. President Samora Machel has made clear that the decisive factor for the success of the Mozambique struggle was:

> "the unity of our people from the Rovumo to the Maputo. The enemy rose and will always rise against this unity: yesterday's colonialism and today's reactionaries and imperialists, exploiters from every race. As in the past, they will try to use everything. Overt and covert appeals to racism, tribalism and regionalism will be intensified. We will make relentless use of the same liberating fire that wiped out colonialism in opposing racism and regionalism, because these are the commanders-in-chief of the enemy's forces which attack and destroy our people's unity, the main weapon in our struggle."

In winning their freedom in heroic struggle your people have scored advances not only for themselves but also for the cause of the worldwide struggle against colonialism, imperialism, foreign domination and racialism in all its forms.

TRANSFORMATION

The Portuguese Empire – the last remaining bastion of direct colonial rule from the capitals of Western imperialism – was bled dry and collapsed under the relentless onslaught of FRELIMO and its brother liberation movements in Guinea-Bissau and Angola. This served to break yet another link in the world system of imperialism and destroyed one of the main pillars of the unholy alliance of Caetano-Vorster-Smith which boasted that it could keep the indigenous millions of Southern Africa in the perpetual control of minority domination. In Portugal itself the swiftness of the transformation which came after 48 years of fascist rule owes a great deal to the sacrifice and revolutionary persistence of FRELIMO's army of liberation which underlined once again the indivisibility of the worldwide struggle for freedom.

For our own people, still in the grip of one of the most barbaric racist systems which history has seen, the freeing of Mozambique has a

very special significance. With the destruction of an ancient colonial empire by the black guerilla in the bush, the myth of perpetual white supremacy has been dramatically exposed. Those who relied on this myth in an attempt to disarm the revolutionary drive, have been answered in no uncertain terms by the triumph of our brothers in Mozambique. People's rule is no longer a distant achievement. It has been won in armed combat right on our borders.

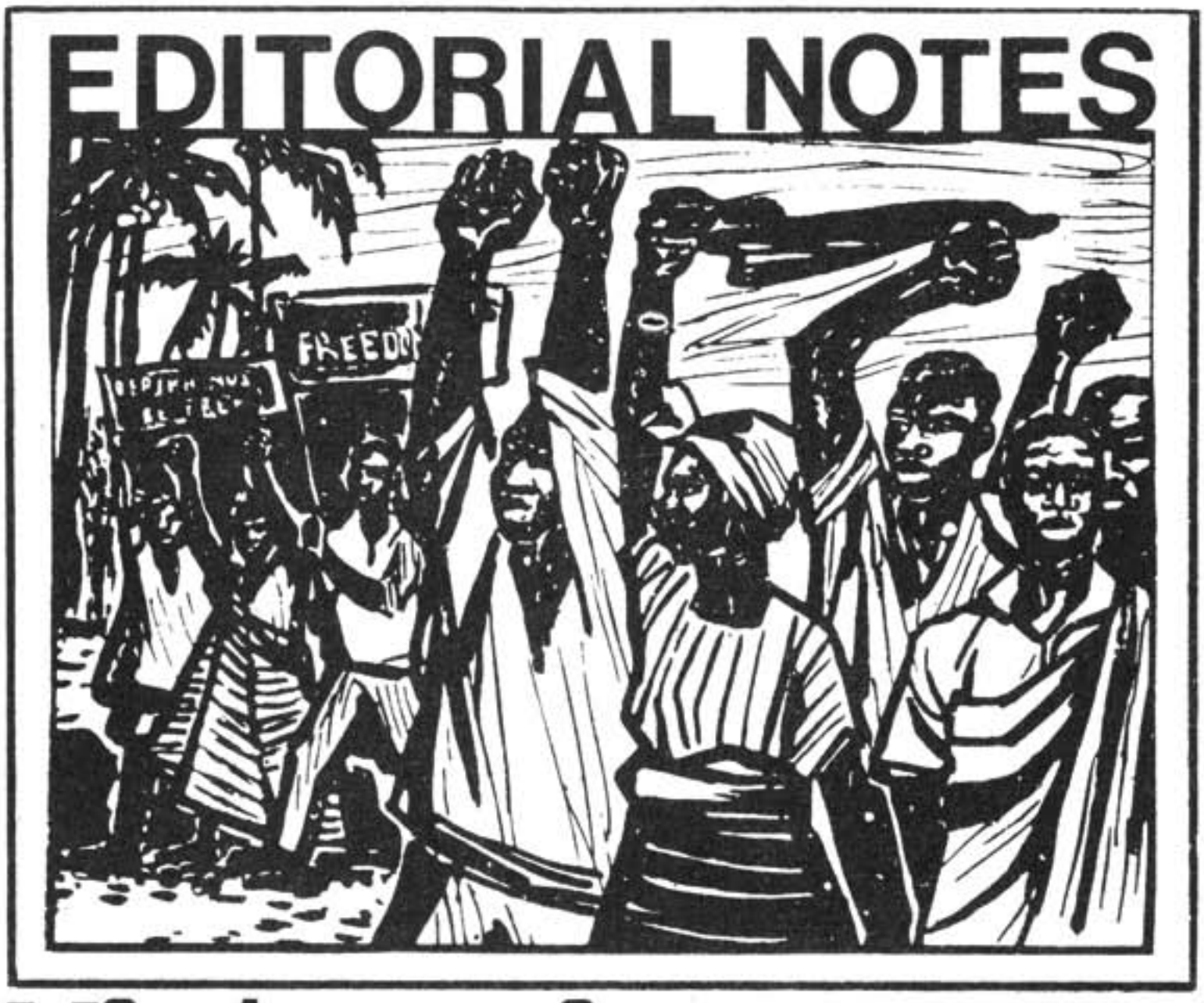
Already the impact of this event has made itself felt on our people and their enemies. Inspired by this common victory, South Africa's oppressed are intensifying their own efforts to put an end to white domination in our land. And the enemy is frantically seeking new ways to divert our peoples' revolutionary energies and to undermine the resolve of independent Africa to eradicate once and for all the scourge of colonial and racial domination from every corner of our continent.

VOICE OF DESPAIR

Vorster's 'voice of reason' is the voice of fear and deception. It is the voice of one who knows that time is running out for white supremacy and who hopes to postpone its doom. It is an echo of the voice of Caetano who vainly tried to hold back the day of reckoning by his policies of 'smiles and blood'. Just as Caetano was answered by your people's onslaught, so will the South African racists be destroyed by the struggle of our people. Your victories against our common enemies of imperialism and colonialism have brought that day nearer. The finest tribute our people can pay to your magnificent achievements is to intensify their own struggles against colonialism and racism and to win a people's South Africa; a South Africa which no longer threatens the hard-won gains of the African revolution and which will march hand-in-hand with you and the rest of our continent to eliminate the remains of colonialism and neo-colonialism and to achieve a society free of all forms of national and social exploitation of man by man.

LONG LIVE INDEPENDENT MOZAMBIQUE!
LONG LIVE THE PEOPLE OF MOZAMBIQUE!
LONG LIVE FRELIMO!
LONG LIVE PEACE, NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND SOCIAL PROGRESS!

The people of Cam Ranh, South Vietnam, welcome their liberators.



Victory in Vietnam-A Turning Point in History

The sudden end of the war in Vietnam, with the victorious People's Liberation Army literally driving the Americans and their puppets into the sea, represents one of the climacteric turning points of history. The agony of the peoples of Vietnam, with its millions of men, women and children murdered and tortured during thirty years of imperialist savagery, their land devastated by high explosives, napalm and innumerable other horrific devices rained upon it from the air, is over. The nightmare horror of the concentration camps, tiger cages and other instruments of repression used by the Saigon gangsters to hold the people in thrall for the greater gain of local and foreign capitalism

has given way to a new dawn in which profit-taking by the few will be replaced by the cooperative effort of all working together to create a just society. The unification of all Vietnam under a single socialist government is a matter of time. Indeed, with the exit of the imperialists from Cambodia and the progress of the people's forces in Laos, the future of the whole of Indo-China is no longer a matter for speculation. The entire area has been removed from the imperialist orbit once and for all.

Nor can the imperialists have any hopes of stimulating counter-revolution, for in the boats, planes and helicopters with the fleeing Americans went also the representatives of the oppressor classes who have battened for so long on the toil and misery of the Vietnamese people. There is no longer even a base for the operations of the CIA, nobody left to bribe or buy. By the very barbarity of their occupation, the imperialists and their puppets have ensured that the new government can begin its mammoth task with as near as possible a clean slate. This was indeed a people's war: the whole people united to repel the invaders and exploiters; the whole people will unite to build a new life of peace and prosperity for all.

Prime factor in the liberation of Vietnam was the courage and determination of the millions of ordinary men and women, led by their workers' parties and inspired by the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, who fought the enemy in the cities as well as the jungles of their land. It was the party of Ho Chi Minh which provided the perspective of victory which enabled the Vietnamese people to overcome not one but three imperialist aggressors – the French, Japanese and Americans. It was the political consciousness of the Vietnamese people, their will to win and their confidence in their ability to win, which sustained them through the long years of suffering in conditions of incredible hardship. Once again it has been demonstrated that in revolutionary warfare, people and their political consciousness count for more than military hardware. As in Korea, it has been the barefoot soldiers of the people's armies who defeated the US army, on paper the strongest military force in the world. Not all the B-52s, napalm and nail bombs, defoliants, atomic submarines and all the rest of the lethal US equipment at the disposal of the Thieu regime could create the morale which in warfare is decisive and which the people's liberation armies possessed in abundance.

After the fall of Saigon, the national chairman of the South African Communist Party, Dr Yusuf Dadoo, sent the following letter to the National Liberation Front in Saigon:

"The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party warmly hails and salutes your Front, your Provisional Revolutionary Government and the heroic Vietnamese people on their historic victory against US imperialism and its puppets.

"Our people join all mankind in expressing their unbounded joy and admiration at your glorious and never-to-be-forgotten achievements after one of the longest, most courageous and most self-sacrificing struggles the world has experienced. Your success, dear comrades is the success of the oppressed and exploited everywhere. It has struck a powerful blow for the cause of peace, independence and progress throughout the world.

"The inspiration of your victorious struggle will strengthen immeasurably the worldwide resolve to end the scourge of imperialism and race domination once and for all, and to create a world free of exploitation of man by man. We dip our flag to the millions of your martyrs who watered the soil of freedom with their blood.

"LONG LIVE THE GREAT VIETNAMESE PEOPLE!
"DEATH TO IMPERIALISM AND RACE DOMINATION EVERYWHERE!"

VICTORY FOR DETENTE

We take away nothing from the glorious achievements of the Vietnamese people if we draw the further conclusion that their victory was not achieved in isolation but in the context of an international situation more and more developing on the lines of detente espoused for so long by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. It has been the major frustration of the United States warmongers that they have it in their physical power to hydrogen-bomb Vietnam off the map and turn the whole area into a lifeless desert. It was not considerations of humanity which prevented them from doing so, but the knowledge that behind the Vietnamese liberation armies stood the mighty forces at the disposal of the socialist countries which could pay them back, and more, in the same coin; not to mention the restraining force of

world opinion which would not have tolerated any excess of the kind advocated by MacArthur in the case of Korea, and by the war-hawks of the Pentagon (not to mention Lord Home of Munich) in the case of Vietnam. The Vietnamese war saw the development of the mightiest movement of solidarity with the liberation forces witnessed since the end of the Second World War; yes, even in the heart of the United States, opposition to and loathing of the war in Vietnam grew steadily year by year, and we all rejoiced at the growing militancy of progressive Americans who showed they were willing to fight and die in their own country to stop the bloodshed in Vietnam. The destruction of Nixon was at least in part due to the revulsion of the American people at the lies and hypocrisy of the US Government over the conduct of the war in Vietnam.

Today the foreign policy of the imperialists, with all their NATOs and SEATOs and other military pacts, lies in ruins, while the foreign policy of the socialist countries is proving triumphant in one country after another in all corners of the globe. Vietnam, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Portugal, Greece, Mozambique, Angola – these names are the living proof that detente does not lead to the disarming of the forces of revolution but on the contrary to their strengthening. Detente has, in fact, if not disarmed, at least curbed the imperialists. They can no longer indulge recklessly in foreign aggression and conquest as they used to do in the past. The gunboat diplomacy on which the British Empire was built, and which was imitated by the other imperialist powers, does not work any more. The US had some of their mightiest gunboats off the shores of Vietnam in those last fateful April days – but all they could be used for was the evacuation of their failure. Detente is paving the way, not only for the ending of world war, but also for the ending of imperialism, lifting from the minds of men the accursed shadow of death and destruction which has hovered over them for most of this century.

The vast shift in the world balance of power which has been reflected in the Vietnam war cannot pass unnoticed by either the ruling cliques or the peoples in the remaining bastions of imperialism which depend for their 'security' on the power of the Pentagon. As far as Africa is concerned, two countries spring immediately to mind – Israel and South Africa, whose governments had hoped to forge an axis for control of the continent. Both countries are almost totally depen-

dent on the support they receive from the US and the rest of the western world, without whose military and financial support neither would be a viable entity. The regimes of both countries stand isolated from the black majorities which surround them and with whom they consistently and arrogantly have refused to reach an accommodation. In pursuing their respective policies of minority aggrandisement and aggression, both have calculated that in the last resort the imperialist powers, to protect their own interests, would be compelled to come to their assistance; and to ensure this support, both have indulged in the most vicious forms of anti-communist and anti-Soviet propaganda and persecution as a guarantee of their bona fides.

The Diem's, Thieu's, Ky's and Lon Nol's of Indo-China today know that no reliance can be placed on western imperialism, which not only failed to save them, but by rousing the antagonism of the masses in effect helped to destroy them. Even if the present rulers of Israel and South Africa are unwilling to read the writing on the wall, the Arab and African masses will have got the message loud and clear; imperialism is no match for the organised power of the people. Given the right leadership and following the correct policies, the liberation movement is indestructible.

SOCIALIST SYSTEM SUPERIOR

And there is a further lesson to be drawn from these events. Since foreign policy is merely an extension of domestic policy, we can also judge that the socialist system is proving itself before our very eyes the superior of the capitalist system. It is not only that the socialist countries, and in particular the Soviet Union, had the military technology and available hardware to give to their Vietnamese comrades. To count guns and bullets, tanks and aeroplanes, is to computerise and dehumanise politics, the American fault which led to all their admitted miscalculations over the Vietnam and Korean wars, as well as the mess they have landed themselves in in the Middle East. By contrast the strength of the socialist world lies in the value it places on human beings, the unity of action and purpose of its people, the construction of a society based on the satisfaction of man's basic needs and not on profits. It is because the socialist countries are building

this type of society that they are the natural allies of the oppressed peoples of all countries of the world. It is for this reason that the Vietnamese people fought with Soviet weapons in their hands, and that the same weapons are in the hands of anti-imperialist fighters everywhere – in the Middle East, in Southern Africa, in Asia and Latin America. Those who talk of 'the division of the world between the super-powers' ignore the class factor in national as well as international politics; in fact, they betray their own nationalistic approach to politics which has sadly distorted their thinking and action at the cost of the further unification and consolidation of the socialist world.

Yet, despite all the blemishes and setbacks on the road to socialism, who cannot see today that the era of imperialism is drawing to a close, and the era of international socialism is steadily opening out? Side by side with the impressive anti-imperialist victories of the last year stand the equally impressive economic performance of the socialist countries in contrast to the chaotic muddle and depression which are blighting the capitalist world. In the socialist countries where economic development is planned and not left to market forces and the whims of spivs and speculators, living conditions steadily improve. In the capitalist countries they steadily deteriorate. In what socialist country does the citizen fear unemployment or the ravages of inflation? In what socialist country do the people live in hovels and shanty-towns while the wealthy live in palaces? In what socialist country is there any sign of the class conflict and class hatred which is destroying the very fabric of the so-called 'western way of life'?

Yes, the progressive forces of the whole world can rejoice at the victories which have been achieved in the recent period. As we said at the start of these notes, coming together as they have done, they mark a climacteric in human history. There can be no more room for doubt or hesitation. At the same time, there is equally no room for self-satisfaction. Let us remember Chile, Zimbabwe, Namibia, the remaining citadels of capitalism and imperialist intrigue or aggression in all continents – not least our own South Africa. The enemy is still no paper tiger, but a real one, with claws of steel, frightened now because he has been gravely wounded, desperate because he knows not which way to turn but is determined to cling on to what remains of his booty right to the bitter end. Imperialism at bay, tense and nervous, its self-confidence undermined, may in some ways be more dangerous

than ever, more prone to adventurism and excesses, anxious to restore its lost prestige. Anti-imperialist forces everywhere must not drop their guard, but rather intensify their efforts, give the enemy no chance to recover, but relentlessly pursue the liberation struggle until final victory has been won.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People in Kliptown on 26 June 1955. The Freedom Charter became the basic policy document of the Congress Alliance, and still today enjoys the support of the African National Congress and its allies in the liberation movement. It still presents the outline of the future South Africa which will emerge from the national democratic revolution.

In this connection we refer to the second issue dated March 1975 of the broadsheet *Vukane/Awake* published in South Africa 'for the liberation of South Africa and all her peoples'.

Pointing out that the supporters of 'dialogue' between South Africa and the rest of independent Africa are to be found amongst all major South African political parties, Bantustan puppets, businessmen local and overseas, exploiters of various types who call for peaceful negotiations instead of violence to achieve a settlement in Southern Africa, *Vukane/Awake* comments:

"These are the same men who make profits out of the arms trade! They earn dividends while our men bend gathering gold out of the bowels of the earth! It is these men who supply the chemicals that have poisoned crops and caused the birth of abnormal babies in South-East Asia! That is the way of capitalism and imperialism! It is death, death, death – in Vietnam, the Middle East, Algeria, Kenya, Philippines, Chile – now or in the past. There is no part of the world that has not felt or had to evade the loathsome grip of imperialism.

"That is why the voices of these men ring hollow. What value is there in a visit from a black leader or even ultimately some tourism for the few 'rich' blacks to and from South Africa, when apartheid remains? What value, such visits, when local blacks have never had any real

discussions with any white South African government? The African National Congress (A.N.C.) repeatedly called for a national convention during the 1950s and early 1960s – these calls were met by gunfire.

"IT WAS ONLY AFTER THESE ATTEMPTS AT MEETING HAD FAILED THAT PREPARATIONS FOR ARMED STRUGGLE WERE STARTED.

"The only meaningful interaction there has been on a mass national scale has been in the Congress Movement, most notably in the great Congress of the People held at Kliptown on 26 June 1955. It was here that the historical revolutionary programme of the liberation movement, the Freedom Charter, was adopted."

Vukane/Awake continues:

"South African capitalism needs 'dialogue' and we don't need South African or international capitalism . . . Any South African foothold in independent Africa is a threat to all freedom-loving states. If the South African fascists cannot speak to their own people, if South Africa can't be governed with internal dialogue, then let there be no debasing contact between independent Africa and the racist South! . . .

"People who see international contact as the road to change close their eyes to the real force, the mass of the people who will accept nothing less than is their right, the people who view the whole of South Africa as their homeland, who expect their full share in this, their own country! That is why the movement of Lutuli, Mandela, Sisulu and other great patriots, unified in the process of decades of struggle, has continued to lead the people in the new conditions demanded by underground work. *Armed struggle* is now accepted as tragic, yet inevitable. Since this is a correct evaluation, since real attempts at dialogue and discussion have been exhausted, we again pledge our total support for the A.N.C., its allies and the heroic fighters of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

"The A.N.C. fights for the mass of the people who do not want short-term inadequate solutions ('half-loaves'). THE PEOPLE WANT NOTHING LESS THAN THEIR RIGHT, ENSHRINED IN THE FREEDOM CHARTER"

Vukane/Awake is printed and circulated in South Africa. So too is the underground Communist Party journal *Inkululeko/Freedom*. So too is *Sechaba/Isizwe* the underground African National Congress journal, whose latest issue is devoted to (a) a salute to the freedom fighters of Angola, and (b) an attack on the Bantustan puppet leaders and the

merchants of 'dialogue' in Africa.

All these journals, produced in circumstances of great danger and illegality in South Africa, are evidently circulating widely enough to upset the authorities. The Johannesburg *Sunday Express* reported on March 23: "Security Branch detectives are searching for a mystery underground printer who is distributing subversive pamphlets. The five-page pamphlets are being posted from various parts of Durban. They attack the South African Government's attempts at dialogue with other African states, and contain strongly-worded propaganda on behalf of the banned African National Congress. The detectives say the printer is probably a long-time member of the ANC and that he is almost certainly acting on orders from the South African Communist Party in London."

The Government and its security police never learn. To accuse the ANC of acting on orders from the Communist Party is an old Nationalist trick which has never worked. It is an insult alike to the Communist Party and the African National Congress. It is an attempt to deny that opposition to the policies of apartheid can come from the oppressed people themselves. It is an attempt to persuade whites that blacks are incapable of coming to their own conclusions and writing their own pamphlets. It is an attempt to persuade African Nationalists that the Communists are their enemies, ignoring the fact that most Communists are in fact black and the staunchest supporters of the policies of their national organisations. This Nationalist Party con trick has failed in the past and will fail again, because it is based on a lie.

. . . AND THE ANNIVERSARY OF FREEDOM DAY

June 26 this year also marks the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of Freedom Day itself. The year was 1950, the year of the passage through parliament of, amongst others, the Suppression of Communism Act, the cornerstone of the edifice of oppression and suppression which the Nationalist Government has been building ever since it came to power.

Three other acts of 1950 indicated the sort of ghetto South Africa the Malan Government wanted to bring into being – the Population

Registration Act establishing a racial register, the Group Areas Act providing for total residential segregation, and the Immorality Act which, together with the 1949 Mixed Marriages Act, was designed to prevent the 'dilution' of white blood by black.

At its last legal national conference held in Johannesburg in January 1950, the Communist Party of South Africa passed a resolution which read in part: "Race relations in South Africa are coming to crisis. Nationalist apartheid is being carried to a point where human dignity is outraged beyond endurance and where every semblance of democratic principle is abandoned."

The resolution forecast: "If the Government is not checked, our country will become an armed camp, in which the great majority of the population will be kept in subjection by ministerial decrees that ban opposition parties and individual opponents, by press censorship, police raids, and a civil service filled with government supporters, by incitements to race riots, by concentration camps and all the other trappings of the Nazi-Fascist State".

Who can deny that the history of the last 25 years has not borne out that forecast? But there was another side to the CPSA resolution. "Let there be no mistake", it said. "The Non-European people are not going to accept apartheid. They are resisting it now and will resist it with more and more determination."

European domination must end, stated the resolution. But change would not come as a gift. It would have to be fought for. "For the Non-European people there can be no illusion about their responsibility for defeating apartheid. It is they who must carry the burden of the struggle through mass, disciplined organisation, a militant policy of active participation in struggle, a determined resistance to every assault on their rights, and above all a fearless attack on the whole system of race discrimination – this is the road to the conquest of freedom."

In the Transvaal the liberatory organisations and the Communist Party joined hands to celebrate May Day 1950 as a people's holiday. Being a Monday, this meant a one-day strike. The demonstration was a huge success, and the Rand's industries came to a standstill when about 80 per cent of the black workers remained at home in response to the strike call. But the police responded with brutal reprisals, breaking up every gathering of more than 12 people. Towards evening the repeated provocations and terrorism of the police inevitably culmin-

ated in violence, at least 18 people being killed and an unknown number injured by police bullets.

When, a few days later the Government introduced the Unlawful Organisations Bill (forerunner of the Suppression of Communism Bill), the liberation movement decided the time had come to hit back. On June 11 ANC President General Dr Moroka announced that June 26 had been chosen as the day on which the people throughout the country would protest both against the May Day killings and against the Suppression of Communism Bill. The Communist Party, Indian Congress, African People's Organisation and ANC Youth League all immediately pledged support and meetings to mobilise the people for action were held all over the country.

Despite the outlawing and dissolution of the Communist Party before the end of the month, Communists everywhere continued active in the preparations for June 26, together with their allies in the liberatory organisations, and the June 26 strike, the first Freedom Day demonstration, turned out to be a great success. In Port Elizabeth, Durban and most of the Natal areas a complete stoppage occurred. In Johannesburg and the Reef towns the majority of black workers stayed at home. In Cape Town there was a 50 per cent response from the African community. Most of the Indian and Malay shops were closed and work at the docks was disrupted.

"Never before did the country witness such a demonstration of fraternal solidarity of purpose by all sections of the Non-European people in the struggle to secure economic and political emancipation", said a statement issued by the National Day of Protest Co-ordinating Committee the following day.

Since that time June 26 has been celebrated as South African Freedom Day. It was the day chosen for the start of the 1952 Defiance Campaign. It was the day of the Congress of the People and the adoption of the Freedom Charter. In the following years June 26 has marked the staging of many demonstrations, the start of many campaigns. It is the day on which the South African liberation movement recalls its past struggles and achievements, commemorates the deeds of its leaders and heroes, re-dedicates itself to the fight for freedom and the achievement of the just, humane and democratic society whose basic principles are outlined in the Freedom Charter.

June 26 is entrenched firmly in our history and in our conscious-

ness. Nothing can be taken away from it, though much still remains to be added to its saga.

RELEASE POLITICAL PRISONERS

Commenting on Vorster's statement that he might be prepared to consider allowing political exiles and prisoners to be restored to freedom provided they recanted their political errors and placed themselves under the control of homeland leaders, the April 1975 issue of the SACP internal organ *Inkululeko–Freedom* said:

"There are few politicians around now who are willing to play the Government's game and turn the release of political prisoners into an ethnic issue. Let Buthelezi ask for the release of Zulus, says Mr Vorster; let Matanzima ask for the release of Xhosas, let CRC spokesmen raise the release of Coloured political prisoners – and so on. We reject with contempt this pathetic attempt to divert the solidarity with our leaders into other channels. The men on Robben Island are South Africans who fought – and are fighting still – for power, for democratic equality and black majority rule throughout the country. They will never accept the humiliation of Bantustan identities. As Africans, Indians and Coloureds they demand the full and equal rights which the Congress movement spelled out 20 years ago, in the Freedom Charter.

"Let any attempt to turn the question of political prisoners into an ethnic issue be seen for what it is: a diversion, aimed at dividing the united call of the people for the release of their leaders. We welcome the fact that the Black Renaissance Convention, meeting at Hammanskraal last December, was unanimously for the release of all political prisoners and detainees, and also against the whole Bantustan policy and all racist institutions. These decisions show the growing maturity of the 'Black Consciousness movement' and underline the correctness of the ANC's policy. They are an effective answer to all who would compromise with the oppressor."

Vorster proved his lack of sincerity in proposing detente when he told the House of Assembly on April 21 this year that he had no intention of releasing Nelson Mandela or any of the other political prisoners.

Replying to the Progressive Party speakers who had appealed for an amnesty for political prisoners, Vorster said he did not consider Mandela and the others as political prisoners. They had, he said, been sent to jail, not because they fought for the rights of blacks in South Africa or opposed Government policy, but because they had been involved in murder and arson. "They were card-carrying members of the Communist Party who did not have the interests of the blacks or whites at heart, but wished to establish a communist state in the interests of the Kremlin." (*Rand Daily Mail*, April 22, 1975).

And as a further sign of the intransigence of the South African authorities, the Government-appointed Commission of Inquiry into the South African penal system, set up in October last year, has refused to consider a memorandum on jail conditions and the treatment of political prisoners drawn up by the white political prisoners in Pretoria local.

Towards the end of January, Justice Minister Kruger listed among his reasons for refusing to release Bram Fischer from jail the fact that Fischer in collaboration with some of his comrades in prison had framed representations to the Commission. In addition to Bram Fischer, the memorandum was signed by Denis Goldberg, John Hosey, David Kitson, John Matthews, Alexandre Moumbaris, Louis Schoon and Jack Tarshish.

The terms of reference of the commission were: "To inquire into the penal system of the Republic of South Africa and to make recommendations for its improvement: Provided that the question whether the death penalty should be retained shall not be inquired into".

in other words, the death penalty was the only item excluded from the purview of the commission. But the chairman of the commission, Justice Viljoen, rejected the politicals' memorandum on the ludicrous grounds that "the matters raised in the memorandum do not fall within the terms of reference of my commission . . . the commission was appointed to inquire into the penal system of the Republic and not to inquire into the prison system."

Because of the prohibitions contained in the Prisons Act and the Suppression of Communism Act, nobody is allowed to know what the prisoners' memorandum said. But the Minister of Justice, Kruger, who somehow knew what was in the memorandum although it was

supposed to be confidential to the commission, was quoted as saying that the representations made by Fischer and his comrades showed "antagonism to the existing system and the maintenance of law and order". And as though taking his cue from the Minister, the commission chairman Viljoen added in his reply to the prisoners' attorney: "It is not the task of the commission, in our view, to inquire into and advise on matters of policy relating to the security of the State". In a further letter he added that the conditions of political prisoners "fall outside the scope of inquiry of my commission".

Once again, political prisoners are treated as a special category of prisoner to whom the normal rules do not apply. Yet the Government continually asserts that there are no political prisoners in South Africa, only criminals convicted under the ordinary laws of the land.

Even in his attempt to define what *is* the function of the commission, Justice Viljoen gives the game away. The terms of reference of the commission, he maintains, "would encompass an inquiry and recommendations on the principles to be applied by judicial officers when sentencing offenders and upon creating administrative measures relating to the execution of and interference with such sentences – measures directed towards the rehabilitative, corrective or reformative and preventive aspects of treatment of prisoners."

The whole world knows that the legislature has provided for minimum sentences for certain categories of political offence, thus binding the hands of the judges. The prison authorities, instructed by the security police and the Minister, have also laid down the rule that there shall be no remission of sentence for political prisoners, and also that they shall be subjected to severe restrictions in relation to study, news, visits, letters, etc. which do not apply to ordinary criminals.

All these matters clearly fall within the terms of reference of the commission. Yet the commission, in line with the views of the Government, refuses even to listen to what the political prisoners have to say. This in our view amounts to cruel and inhuman treatment of prisoners who are being punished beyond the bounds of reason simply because they oppose apartheid.

It is no use the Government or the commission complaining the politicals are in a separate category because they resorted to violence or the planning of violence – after all, the commission will presumably take evidence (if it is offered) from murderers and rapists. No, it is the

politicals' "antagonism to the existing system" which places them beyond the pale in the eyes of the South African racists.

Let the petty tyrants who rule South Africa know that their persecution of political prisoners is adding to that antagonism, not only amongst the peoples of South Africa itself, but throughout the world. The tide of hatred of apartheid is growing into an irresistible flood which not all Vorster's tanks and jet bombers will be able to contain.

Death of Bram Fischer

The following statement has been issued by the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party.

The death of comrade Bram Fischer has removed from the political scene one of the greatest figures in the South African revolutionary movement. A member of our Central Committee since January 1945, comrade Fischer was a Communist in the truest mould. Those who knew him, worked with him, and shared cells with him in South Africa's prisons, will mourn the loss, not only of an outstanding revolutionary, but also of a man whose comradeship and warmth earned him the affection of all liberation fighters. Comrade Fischer died as he lived: an example of the highest dedication to the cause of freedom and social emancipation regardless of personal cost.

Comrade Fischer's commitment to the struggle against race domination and exploitation is all the more impressive because, at every stage of his life, he had a choice of either closing his eyes to tyranny and enjoying its fruits, or helping to smash it and suffering its vicious retaliation. Had he chosen to behave like most of the privilege-seeking whites, he had it within his grasp to live a life of comfort and riches. Yet he spurned these temptations, and in the single-minded pursuit of his ideals, he sacrificed his professional career, deprived himself of

normal family companionship, and risked his very life without hesitation or regret.

Comrade Fischer chose this difficult path of sacrifice and struggle because he could find neither rest nor personal happiness in the midst of misery for the majority of our people, and he was revolted by comfort and ease which has its basis in racism and the exploitation of man by man. But he realised that individual opposition to race tyranny was not enough and that the South Africa he wanted to see could only be brought about by building the instruments of liberation – the working class and the national movement. As a disciplined member of this movement, he changed his identity to lead the hard life of an underground revolutionary at the head of our Party's clandestine organisation.

Fearing and hating his principles and his example as a 'renegade' from white privilege, the South African racists vented on comrade Fischer all their hatred and spleen. He was continuously hounded and persecuted by the Security Police, finally to be imprisoned for life in 1966. But the man whom the South African racists hounded to his grave won honour amongst the majority of mankind, both in South Africa and throughout the world.

His long-standing record as an internationalist, as a leading figure in the world peace movement, and as a staunch supporter of the world community of socialist nations, earned him the Lenin Peace Prize. His sincerity and principled dedication to the cause of liberation won him respect and admiration even amongst many who did not embrace comrade Fischer's unswerving loyalty to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and communism. He acted as the conscience of racial tyranny and, as stated by the African National Congress in a statement after his arrest:

> "White South Africa, blinded by racial prejudice and bigotry, has no conception of the debt of history they owe to such men as Bram Fischer who forfeit the privileges of white society and place themselves unreservedly on the side of the oppressed."

And to South Africa's oppressed millions the passing of this noble and pure spirit is a grievous loss. His contribution to their cause and to the cause of socialism has helped to bring the day nearer when South Africa will be rid of all forms of discrimination and exploitation. In such a people's South Africa comrade Fischer's name will forever be remembered and honoured.

Bram Fischer

A Communist in the Truest Mould

by Peter Mackintosh

Abram Fischer (Bram as he was always called by his friends) was born on a Free State farm in 1908 – one of five children of one of the most distinguished Afrikaner families in South Africa. His father, J.P. Fischer was a Judge President of the Orange Free State, and his grandfather, Abram Fischer was principal adviser to President M.T. Steyn, the last President of the old Boer Republic of the Free State, and later Prime Minister of the Orange River Colony before the Union of 1910, a member of the National Convention which drew up the Union Constitution, and after Union a member of Botha's first Cabinet for three years until his death in 1913. Bram's mother Ella Fischer also came from an old Afrikaner family and had secretly helped the Boers against the British imperialists during the war of 1899-1902.

In his 3½-hour statement on March 28, 1966 to the court which eventually sentenced him to life imprisonment, Bram Fischer explained how he had changed from being a supporter of the Afrikaner Nationalist Party into becoming one of the outstanding leaders of the South African Communist Party.

"Like many young Afrikaners I grew up on a farm", he said. "Between the ages of eight and twelve my daily companions were two young Africans of my own age. I can still remember their names. For

four years we were, when I was not at school, always in each other's company. We roamed the farm together, we hunted and played together, we modelled clay oxen and swam. And never can I remember that the colour of our skins affected our fun, or our quarrels or our close friendship in any way.

"Then my family moved to town and I moved back to the normal White South African mode of life where the only relationship with Africans was that of master to servant."

Bram Fischer told the court that he was a Nationalist Party supporter at the age of six and remained one for the next twenty years. In 1929 he was the first Nationalist Prime Minister of a student parliament.

SEPARATE AMENITIES

One of his main interests while at university was the study of the theory of segregation which seemed to him at the time to provide the only solution to South Africa's problems. To put his theories into practice, he joined the Bloemfontein Joint Council of Europeans and Africans, "a body devoted largely to trying to induce various authorities to provide proper (and separate) amenities for Africans.

"I arrived for my first meeting with other newcomers. I found myself being introduced to leading members of the African community. I found I had to shake hands with them. This, I found, required an enormous effort of will on my part. Could I really, as a White adult, touch the hand of a black man in friendship?

"That night I spent many hours in thought trying to account for my strange revulsion when I remembered I had never had any such feelings towards my boyhood friends. What became abundantly clear was that it was I and not the Blackman who had changed; that despite my growing interest in him, I had developed an antagonism for which I could find no rational basis whatsoever . . . In succeeding years . . . I came to understand that colour prejudice was a wholly irrational phenomenon and that true human friendship could extend across the colour bar once the initial prejudice was overcome. And that I think was lesson No.1. on my way to the Communist Party."

While at university Fischer applied successfully for a Rhodes Scholar-

ship and studied at New College, Oxford. He returned to South Africa in the period preceding World War Two, when the whole of mankind stood under the threat of Hitlerism. Though the South African Nationalists backed the Nazis, Fischer found the genocidal race theories of the Third Reich unacceptable and was moved to join the anti-fascist forces in Johannesburg where he had opened his practice as a barrister. On September 18, 1937, he married Mollie Krige, also from a well-known Afrikaans family, a niece of Mrs Smuts, the wife of South Africa's war-time Prime Minister. Bram and Mollie both played an outstanding part in progressive causes throughout the rest of their lives.

JOINED THE PARTY

The Fischers eventually joined the Communist Party for two main reasons: 1. because it was the only party in South Africa which stood four-square behind the demand for equal rights for all South Africans, irrespective of race, creed or colour; and 2. because of the outstanding courage of its members and their willingness to work and sacrifice for their ideals. It was after joining the Party that Bram seriously studied its theories and became a convinced Marxist. He soon rose into a leading position in the Party and was elected to its central committee in January 1945.

In 1946 he was one of the members of the Johannesburg District Committee of the Communist Party who were arrested and charged under the Riotous Assemblies Act with causing the strike of 80,000 African miners on the Witwatersrand gold mines. The charge was eventually reduced to aiding an illegal strike after it had broken out, and Fischer and the other accused were fined.

Bram was already an established figure in the legal profession, specialising in mining and water rights. A conviction for an offence of this kind might well have destroyed the career of a lesser man in South Africa, yet Bram was so highly respected and popular a figure that he continued to get briefs from the very mining companies against which he was alleged to have conspired. But events were drawing him steadily deeper and deeper into politics as race and class confrontation in South Africa intensified after the advent of the Nationalist Govern-

ment to power in 1948.

He was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party at the time it was banned by the Nationalist Government in 1950 – yet this did not prevent his colleagues from allowing his name to go forward as a Queen's Counsel a few years later. Both as a lawyer and as a man, he won respect not only from his friends but also from his enemies. Had he remained a Nationalist, there is no doubt he would have ended up as a Cabinet Minister. Had he eschewed politics and stuck to law, he would have become a judge, probably a member of the Appeal Court.

But for Bram Fischer there was only one road forward – that set out by the Communist Party to put an end to the race and class confrontation in South Africa which threatened to plunge the country into the horrors of the civil war.

Bram Fischer's greatest legal and political triumphs were achieved during the mammoth treason trial which ran from 1956 to 1961 and in which he was one of the leading counsel defending the 156 men and women of all races charged with treason for propagating the Freedom Charter adopted at the historic Congress of the People at Kliptown, near Johannesburg, in 1955; and the Rivonia sabotage trial of Nelson Mandela and his comrades in 1964. It can safely be said that the brilliant and painstaking work of Bram Fischer and his defence team in the latter case was one of the main factors responsible for saving them from the death sentence.

Exhausted by months of hard work and strain in that case, Bram Fischer and his wife set off the day after sentence was pronounced to enjoy a well-earned rest in the Cape. Driving through the Free State at night, Bram swerved to avoid a cyclist. The car plunged into a river. Bram and a passenger managed to struggle free, but Mollie was drowned, despite their frantic efforts to save her.

In September 1964 Bram Fischer was arrested and charged with 13 others under the Suppression of Communism Act with being a member of the illegal Communist Party, taking part in the activities of the Party and furthering the aims of Communism. Shortly after his arrest he applied for bail to take a case on appeal to the Privy Council in London. The State opposed bail, but prominent members of Bram's profession leapt forward to act as surety for him, guaranteeing, though they did not by any means share his political opinions, that he would

return to South Africa to stand trial. Bram was granted bail of £5,000. He left for London in October 1964, argued and won his case before the Privy Council and then returned to face his trial.

WENT UNDERGROUND

In January 1965, while the case was still in progress, Bram Fischer estreated his bail and went underground to lead the forces of the Communist Party in the resistance movement against the apartheid regime. In a note to a colleague he wrote: "I can no longer serve justice in the way I have attempted to do during the past 30 years . . .

"Cruel, discriminatory laws multiply each year, bitterness and hatred of the Government and its laws are growing daily. Unless this whole intolerable system is changed radically and rapidly disaster must follow. Appalling bloodshed and civil war will become inevitable because, as long as there is oppression of a majority such oppression will be fought with increasing hatred.

"To try to avoid this becomes a supreme duty, particularly for an Afrikaner because it is largely the representatives of my fellow Afrikaners who have been responsible for the worst of these discriminatory laws . . . If by my fight I can encourage even some people to think about, to understand and to abandon the policies they now so blindly follow, I shall not regret any punishment I may incur."

Fischer successfully evaded the police until November 11, 1965 when he was arrested in Johannesburg while driving to an assignment. Convicted on 15 counts of sabotage on the basis of evidence furnished by political detainees who had broken down and made statements to the police, as well as by informers, he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

During the eight years of his incarceration in a Pretoria prison, the South African authorities did everything in their power to break Bram Fischer. At first he was kept in solitary confinement, in a cell with only thin felt matting for his bed, a pot latrine, poor food. Placed in the lowest category, his visits and reading matter were drastically restricted. The warders heaped every possible humiliation on him, forcing him to brush cement floors on his hands and knees, to clean latrines with a toothbrush, treating him as a traitor to the 'volk'.

Despite his failing health, Fischer refused to be broken. One of the white politicals who served with him, David Evans, wrote afterwards: "Characteristically, though younger prisoners tried to shield him from unpleasant or 'undignified' work, he insisted on doing his share – and more – of prison tasks. The difficulty, in fact, was to prevent him doing too much in trying to help others through their day. He encouraged us all – by word, by example, by shafts of satirical humour. And while he took his own treatment impassively he spoke out bluntly and fearlessly about general grievances".

As his health deteriorated, public appeals were voiced nationally and internationally calling for his release on compassionate grounds. But the Government refused to budge. Even when in 1971 Bram's only son, Paul, died suddenly from a heart attack, the authorities refused him permission to attend the funeral.

Eventually, however, when it was realised that Bram Fischer was suffering from the terminal effects of cancer, the Government in March of this year released him from prison into the custody of his brother Paul in Bloemfontein. But even though dying, Bram Fischer was placed under house arrest, and allowed no contact with the outside world except for his immediate family. He died in his sleep at 7 o'clock on the morning of May 8.

INTERNATIONAL HONOURS

Bram Fischer's sacrifice and sufferings have not been in vain. The great man whom the South African racists drove to his death has won a firm place in the annals of history. Both black and white South Africans were profoundly influenced by the course of his career and martyrdom.

Some, at least, of the Afrikaner intellectuals whom Fischer had in mind when making his court speech in 1966 were profoundly affected by his appeal. In the course of a lecture in Johannesburg in February 1973, the Afrikaans novelist Andre Brink, calling for radical social change to eliminate racialism, injustice and exploitation, paid tribute to "that great South African, Bram Fischer, who is slowly dying in jail". It was Fischer's statement from the dock, said Brink, which had revolutionised his own thinking. He was not a communist, but Fischer's ideals of justice and love, in conflict with the apartheid system, had

made him a personal hero of Mr Brink. Earlier this year Brink expressed his regret that he had not met the two men he considered the greatest South Africans of his day – Bram Fischer and Chief Albert Lutuli.

In an obituary statement, the African National Congress said:

"He died as he lived – fighting and sacrificing his all for the liberation of the oppressed peoples in racist South Africa. He sacrificed wealth, fame, comfort, high position, a privileged life in an already privileged white society for the hazardous role of working with our cadres in the underground movement."

In April 1967, Bram Fischer was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize, a fitting tribute to a great man whose name will live in the minds of all progressive peoples, both in South Africa and abroad, when those who persecuted him have been long forgotten.

Messages of condolence on the death of Bram Fischer have been received by his family in South Africa and Rhodesia and by the South African Communist Party from fraternal parties, liberation movements and progressive organisations and individuals in all parts of the world.

Imperialism Struggles to Save Southern Africa

by Phineas Malinga

Before the Second World War, the relationship of imperialism to southern Africa was a simple one. There were two imperialist powers involved – Britain and Portugal. Each had its own territories. The British Colonial Office ruled Southern and Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland. The Union of South Africa, though self-governing, was still, economically speaking, in a position very little different from that of a colony. The great finance houses which owned the South African mining industry (Rand Mines, Union Corporation, Consolidated Gold Fields, Johannesburg Consolidated Investment, General Mining) were English companies with their head offices in London. The same was true of the two banks (Barclays Bank D.C.O. and the Standard Bank) which dwarfed all competitors.

South Africa's communications with the outside world were largely in the hands of British shipping lines. Manufacturing industry was relatively unimportant and subsidiaries of British companies accounted for a very large part of it. By comparison with these vast concentrations of power, other imperialist presences were unimportant. The Netherlands Bank of South Africa was virtually the only remnant of Dutch imperialism and its share of the banking market was small. Three American oil companies (Atlantic, Mobiloil, Texaco) marketed

their products alongside the British Shell, and American cars sold well in South Africa. Germany had a share of the market for manufactured goods and a pro-German Cabinet Minister like Oswald Pirow was able to take steps to increase the share. The Germans, however, owned no significant part of the means of production in South Africa.

POST WAR PERIOD

The post war period has been marked by a steady decline in the extent of British domination of the economy of southern Africa. The place of Britain has not, however, been taken by any one imperialist rival. Instead, an extremely complex relationship has grown up between indigenous South African capitalism and several imperialist powers. Thus, in the mining industry, the dominant force is now the Anglo American Corporation. Though British, American, French and Belgian interests are involved in Anglo American, it is managed and controlled entirely in South Africa. Anglo American has swallowed up Rand Mines. Union Corporation and J.C.I. remain substantially British-owned, though no longer British-managed. But Union Corporation has been the subject of a takeover bid (so far unsuccessful) by a South African company. General Mining, once the empire of the Albu family, has now become a vehicle for Afrikaner capital.

There have been similar changes in the banking scene. The indigenous Volkskas has become a substantial rival to Barclays and the Standard. They meanwhile, have been compelled by South African legislation to alter their corporate structure. Barclays D.C.O. was a single company with its head office in London and its entire South African operation consisted merely of branches of the London company. Now there is a separate registered South African company, Barclays National Bank. The majority of the shares in it are owned by Barclays Bank International, in London, but shares in Barclays National are traded on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, so that South African investors can buy them.

During the same period, foreign investment in South Africa has increased substantially. This investment has been predominantly in manufacturing industry, though there have also been some big new mining projects, such as Rio Tinto Zinc's Palabora copper mine.

While British investment has continued and its total has grown steadily to well over R2,000 million, the British share of total foreign investment has declined to about two-thirds. The United States investment has risen steeply to over R500 million, while France and West Germany have come from nowhere to occupy third and fourth place.

Trade patterns have changed in much the same way as investment patterns. Britain continues to be South Africa's largest trading partner, but the rate of increase of British-South African trade has been greatly surpassed by the rate of increase of trade with other imperialist nations. From 1961 to 1967, British exports to South Africa increased by 71%, French by 135% and West German by 113%. In one case, however, there has been a marked divergence between trade and investment figures. Japan has recorded the biggest trade increase of all (205% from 1961 to 1967) but is not a major investor. This reflects Japanese policy, which does not favour the export of capital as a method of imperialist expansion (wage rates still being low enough in Japan to make the expansion of national productive capacity the most profitable for Japanese capitalists).

The changing patterns of trade are illustrated by the figures for the period January to September 1974 which show that West Germany has overtaken Britain as the main source of South Africa's imports, though the UK is still the main market for South African goods. The figures for the period are:

	SA Imports	*SA Exports*
West Germany	19%	9%
United Kingdom	17%	29%
USA	16%	8%
Japan	12%	10%
Africa	5%	14%
Others	31%	30%

SOUTHERN AFRICA

It is important to note that the interlocking capitalist-imperialist system which has grown up in the post-war period is not in any way confined

within the boundaries of the Republic of South Africa. The Anglo American Corporation is not only the biggest capitalist enterprise in the Republic, but also in Botswana and in Zambia. The same banks dominate the whole region. Numerous overseas enterprises use their Johannesburg offices as their headquarters for the whole region. Throughout the region, American, French, German and Italian capital, together with Japanese trade, have increased their penetration at the expense of Britain, but without depriving Britain (or Portugal, in the case of the former Portuguese colonies) of first place. In Zimbabwe, this process has been especially marked during the period of sanctions and it is the integration of the capitalist system for the whole region that has ensured the defeat of sanctions.

The history of the Cabora Bassa dam affords a particularly instructive example of the way in which the present-day system works. The originators of the scheme were the Portuguese government, the Electricity Supply Commission (the South African state-owned electrical generating monopoly) and the Anglo American Corporation. The role of Anglo American is described as follows in the company's journal *Optima*, Vol.24, No.3.

> "Anglo American Corporation itself, with its wide experience in international business co-operation, has taken a key part in the project, in putting together – sponsoring in fact – and co-ordinating the activities of the consortium, the latter through the chairmanship of the executive committee of the consortium, and in providing administrative and secretarial services to the committee in Lisbon."

Three rival sets of firms submitted tenders for the civil and electrical engineering work. One team was predominantly British, one predominantly American. The third was French, German and South African. The civil engineering work was principally divided between Compagnie de Constructions Internationales, of Paris, LTA Ltd., of Johannesburg and Shaftsinkers Ltd., of Johannesburg. The electrical engineering work was divided between a number of German and French companies, notably AEG-Telefunken, Brown Boverie, Siemens and Compagnie Generale d'Enterprises Electriques. This third team was awarded the contract. Its ability to carry on its obligations depended heavily on export credits provided by the German, French and South African

governments (in the amounts of R95m, R62m and R42m respectively).

The particularly interesting features of the case are these: firstly, no one imperialist power was able to claim for itself the right to undertake this venture; secondly, it was, partly at least, within the power of South African interests to decide which outsiders should participate; thirdly, the final result could not have been achieved without the co-operation of four governments and numerous private firms, both in South Africa and in Western Europe.

The most interesting feature of all is that it now lies within the power of the people of Mozambique led by Frelimo to ensure that they, and not the imperialists, will be the beneficiaries of the scheme. Without in any way underestimating the ingenuity with which all the imperialist interests involved will labour to avert that conclusion, we have confidence that the men and women who won the war will defeat the machinations of neo-colonialism.

THE INTERESTS OF IMPERIALISM

The overriding interest of all the imperialists can be simply described. It is to preserve this delicately interlocking machinery of exploitation which covers the whole sub-continent. Nothing more vividly illustrated the overriding nature of this interest than the case of Rhodesian sanctions. Britain had an interest in vindicating her power and prestige by bringing Smith to heel. She had an interest in preserving her markets in Rhodesia against Japanese and European encroachment. Yet when it came to the crunch, these interests had to take second place. Nothing could be allowed to rock the wonderful, profitable, neo-colonial southern African boat.

This example leads to a more general conclusion. Although the different imperialist powers undoubtedly have competing and conflicting interests in southern Africa, the contradictions between them have been controlled and regulated to a remarkable degree. Although southern Africa is one of the most controversial regions in the world, although it has been endlessly debated at the United Nations, although the progressive African states have done their utmost to bring pressure to bear, no really serious divergencies of policy have opened up between the imperialist powers. Policy differences between one

country and another are no greater than those between one political party and another in the same country. For instance, the difference between the present policies of Britain and France on arms for South Africa is much the same as the difference between the British Labour and the British Conservative Party. Furthermore, the differences, such as they are, are conducted with the utmost politeness. In spite of strong feelings which exist in the British Labour Party on apartheid – feelings which the leadership claims to share – Britain does not attack France for selling arms to South Africa. Neither does France attack Britain for operating a partial arms embargo.

THE PEOPLE'S FIGHT

It may be that the present depression will lead to an era of intensified contradictions between imperialist powers, with the result that the united imperialist front in southern Africa will break down. The people must be on the alert for any opportunity to drive wedges between one imperialist power and another. Yet it would be unwise to rely upon the appearance of such opportunities. The present reality is that of a functioning imperialist system, of which Caetano was, and Smith is, a comparatively small component part. The system is now working flat out to adjust itself to the loss of these components. In the short term, it may succeed. In the long term, progressives can have only one objective – the total demolition of the system, root and branch, throughout the sub-continent.

No one brand of imperialism is better than any other. British or United States imperialism is no better than South African imperialism; nor can one be separated from the other, for as we have shown, all contribute to and benefit from one another's operations. The Western powers justify their continuing support for Vorster's apartheid state on the grounds that the security of Western civilisation is at stake. But what they are all talking about is the security of their profits.

Today, however, the peoples of all southern Africa are on the march – against colonialism, racism and, above all, the capitalist system which nurtures all the evils from which they suffer. The interests of imperialism suffered a grievous blow with the collapse of Portuguese fascism and the loss of the colonies of Mozambique, Angola and

Guinea Bissau. They will fight hard to repair the damage, but it will be a rearguard action, doomed to ultimate defeat.

The greatest contradiction facing imperialism is that it conflicts with the will of the peoples of Africa to be free from its shackles. As the long-drawn-out and bitter struggle in Vietnam has demonstrated, there can be only one winner in this battle. The age of imperialism is coming to an end. The era of socialism has already opened and its power and influence are spreading wider with every passing year.

The Battle For Angola

by Alexander Sibeko

'Angola's wealth must be put at the service of the Angolan people and of them alone'
(Agostinho Neto)

With Angola's day of independence scheduled for November 11th the priority for all genuine Angolan patriots is to ensure the orderly transfer of power into the hands of the Angolan people and their legitimate representatives.

This is all the more crucial in view of the violence and provocations being staged by imperialism and its agents on the eve of Angola's entry into the world company of independent states. International imperialism, led by the USA, is intent on disrupting the unity of the Angolan people in order to create a Congo-style situation which would facilitate its intervention and control of the key sectors of the emerging nations.

THE ALGARVE AGREEMENT

A complex political situation exists in Angola, representing many opposing forces and tendencies; nevertheless after a bitter armed

struggle against Portuguese colonialism lasting almost 14 years and led by Dr Agostinho Neto's broadly based People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the conditions for a peaceful evolution to independence were reached in January 1975 through the Algarve Agreement. Angola's problems are reflected in the fact that besides the MPLA – which bore the brunt of the struggle – two other movements – Holden Roberto's FNLA and Jonas Savimbi's UNITA – are party to that agreement and have won a place in Angola's transitional Government. Savimbi's is simply a splinter movement of Roberto's, and both organisations have waged an essentially phoney armed struggle, relying on external backing rather than the support of the Angolan people.

For many years it was pointed out that these movements were being nurtured in the wings, "waiting to benefit from a victory that others would have won." Behind them stand the sinister forces of imperialism and neo-colonialism: in Roberto's case the patronage of the CIA, American high finance and its African ally, President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, who happens to be his brother-in-law.

Meanwhile Savimbi, who has had long contact with the Portuguese colonial forces and whose main claim to fame was that his small token force was 'actually' based inside Angola (albeit with the tacit agreement of the Portuguese), has emerged as the hero of Angola's white business community and the South African press. If ex-General Spinola and President Mobutu had had their way Angola's future would have been concentrated in the exclusive hands of these gentlemen, but the revolutionary process in Portugal and her former African territories, the mass support inside Angola for the MPLA, the solidarity of the brother organisations of FRELIMO and PAIGC and progressive African states have dictated otherwise.

Thus the Spinola line which considered the decolonisation process in Angola to be 'different and special' from Mozambique and Guine was superseded by the Algarve agreement which, with all its limitations, opened the road to real independence. In terms of the agreement a transitional Government was established composed of an equal number of representatives from the three movements as well as the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement. The task is to prepare the country for independence and elections to a constituent assembly. The spirit of Algarve calls for an era of cooperation and fraternity between the movements, of peaceful organisation, in order to allow the Angolan

people the opportunity to express their will. The agreement provides for the integration of troops from all the movements into a mixed defence force, the Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA), including also Portuguese troops who will be phased out by next February.

NAZI TERROR TACTICS

Contrary to the true needs of the Angolan people the transition period has been marked by an alarmingly deteriorating situation, the ugly violence of which threatens to jeopardise the gains and sacrifices of the struggle and disrupt national unity.

While it was only to be expected that Angola's advance to independence would evoke resistance on the part of the reactionary section of the settler population which has thrived on the exploitation of the indigenous population in the period of colonial rule, and following the fall of Portuguese fascism provoked riots and the slaughter of Africans on a mass scale, the latest wave of violence has been unleashed by the FNLA and has been compared by Luanda doctors and health workers to a 'Nazi' terror campaign. Frustrated at their total inability to win the support of the Luanda African population away from the MPLA, the FNLA storm-troopers, together with white ultras, launched an attack on the MPLA barracks during Easter week, and when this failed began to massacre the civilian population. Over 200 Africans were murdered, many with their hands tied behind their backs, because of their support for the MPLA. Again, at the end of April these same forces, with UNITA troops in support, using armaments that have been pouring in from Zaire, virtually attempted to annihilate the MPLA in Luanda. After a week of intensive fighting, leaving up to 1,000 dead and many more wounded, a most precarious 'peace' prevailed.

These outrages are but the latest events in a sinister chain of racial violence and political strife, tribal animosity and secessionist bids, beatings and killings (including an attempt on Dr Neto's life), which is being cunningly manipulated to subvert Angolan liberation through chaos and disruption.

The road to Angolan freedom has never been a simple nor easy one. Powerful foreign interests have always sought to control Angola's

considerable wealth and resources; and the complex manoeuvres and sordid conspiracies related to the transition from Portuguese African rule can only be understood in the light of this fact.

PLUNDERING THE ECONOMY

Angola, the richest of Portugal's former colonies, has a population of six million, is twice the size of France, and is potentially one of the wealthiest countries in Africa It is the large foreign interests in Angola – West European, American, South African, Japanese – not simply local settler interests – which are placing all sorts of obstacles in the path of the real decolonisation process, and which for more than a decade have worked to obstruct MPLA's liberation struggle.

In the greedy big-business circles of international capitalism Angola is being referred to as Africa's 'Eldorado' and 'Kuwait'. Whilst oil, coffee, diamonds and iron-ore are Angola's most valuable commodities and account for nearly 75% of export earnings, there is a whole range of other minerals and cash crops including gold, manganese, copper, nickel, phosphates, uranium, timber, cotton, sisal, tobacco, sugar, rice and bananas together with a lucrative fishing industry and an expanding manufacturing and processing sector, which has attracted the profiteers like flies around a jam tin.

Angola's economy is undergoing a period of rapid growth due to the oil rush and mineral boom, but the country's wealth is falling into the hands of the giant multi-national corporations whose operations are inimical to the people's interests. The rate of industrial growth reached 26% in 1973 and investment in manufacturing for the same year more than doubled the 1969 total. Behind the pretty figures lie the reality of economic plunder and the race to strip Angola of its riches for the benefit of the 'free world'.

Portugal only opened-up Angola to foreign capital in the 'sixties in order to help finance the colonial wars and save herself from going bankrupt. Previously she had curtailed investment to preserve Angola for herself, and lacking the capital had concentrated on agricultural production using forced labour. Portugal's 'oldest ally' Britain, however, always enjoyed a favoured position and developed her interests early on, particularly through the operations of Tanganyika Conces-

sions. This company owns the Benguela Railway which runs from the coast to the Zaire and Zambia copperbelts. In order to attract overseas capital fascist Portugal granted concessions allowing foreign investors to repatriate annually profits equal to 12% of their capital investment. Total investment is substantial and because of its recent penetration is only now beginning to pay dividends. Investors are thus more than anxious that the political set-up should protect their interests.

COFFEE, DIAMONDS, OIL AND IRON

Angola's so-called boom is a result of that typical pattern of imperialist exploitation: export-led growth in the extractive sectors. Whatever sector of the economy is investigated one finds the dominance of foreign enterprises.

Although the mineral and manufacturing sectors are undergoing spectacular growth, 80% of the economically active population are still involved in agriculture. Agricultural commodities account for 44% of exports compared to 42% in the extractive sector. Coffee is the most important crop and accounted for 27% of total exports in 1973, valued at approximately £90 million. Together with Portuguese and Belgian capital, South Africa's General Mining and Finance Company is one of the dominant concerns.

Diamond production is largely in the hands of one of Angola's oldest and biggest mining concerns, Diamang, which is controlled by Harry Oppenheimer's De Beers group; but a number of new companies involving American capital have been set up. Production in 1973 reached 2.2m carats accounting for 10.5% of exports or about £35 million. Belgian interests are also heavily involved in Angolan diamonds.

America has led the rush in the exploitation of Angola's recently discovered off-shore oil fields. Oil has emerged as the leading export commodity accounting for 30.1% of exports in 1973 valued at approximately £100 million. The production of crude oil from the Cabinda oilfields was over 7 million tons in 1972, and the value today is put at £160 million. Production is expected to rise to 15m tons over the next few years although reserves from the Cabinda enclave, which lies on the northern side of the Congo river, are estimated at only 600m tons. The value of the oil will be increased when a preferential concession

originally arranged with fascist Portugal runs out. One million tons of Angolan oil are at present being sold to Portuguese refineries at $ 5 a barrel below the world price of $ 14 a barrel.

The Cabinda oilfields are in the grip of Gulf Oil; a subsidiary of the US Texaco Company which has invested $ 150 million in Angola. Gulf is pumping 150,000 barrels a day out of Cabinda. Petrangol is another important multi-national on the oil scene. It is a joint Portuguese and foreign consortium in which 28% of the holdings are controlled by South African companies which include General Mining and Anglo-American. Petrangol supplies oil products to the domestic market from its Luanda refinery and makes sub-contractural arrangements in the oil prospecting business.

The oil derricks are rising fast along the entire Angolan coast. Texaco have discovered a new field in an area south of the Congo river. In the hunt are all the major oil companies of the West. The biggest consumers of Angolan oil are the USA (50%), Portugal (25%), Canada (14%) and Japan (6%).

Iron-ore mining in the Cassinga area, where reserves are estimated at 2,000m tons, is in the hands of Krupp of West Germany, American concerns like Bethlehem Steel and General Electric, as well as Italian and British interests. Exports reached 6.3m tons in 1973 or 6.4% of total exports valued at approximately £20 million. Further development is taking place with the financial support of the South African Industrial and Development Corporation and the Union Corporation. The ore is exported mainly to Japan, West Germany and France.

Whilst Angola's wealth is being plundered in this fashion her indigenous people do not benefit at all. Regarded as a source of cheap labour the African workers and peasants are ruthlessly exploited in order to make foreign investors and shareholders grow richer by the day.

There is a great deal at stake in Angola, and the imperialists and their multi-national corporations will go to any lengths to hang on to their vast interests. They will stop at nothing to help into power those who would present the region's riches to them on a plate. They want a new Angolan government which in true neo-colonial style will give foreign enterprises the freedom to continue their unrestricted activities.

The main question posed at this crucial juncture of Angola's history is whether neo-colonialism or real independence will prevail. Since the

major obstacle to the entrenchment of neo-colonialist and imperialist interests is the MPLA, it is not surprising that the organisation and its leadership are the prime target of attack by the reactionaries and their lackeys.

The MPLA has long demonstrated its role as the genuine spearhead of liberation and national unity. The imperialists are alarmed at the MPLA's significant influence among the African people, and particularly at the movement's revolutionary commitment which has never simply ended at kicking out Portuguese colonialism, but extends to building a fully independent Angola, free from imperialist domination.

Whilst the MPLA is an outstanding example of a movement which has always adopted a principled position of opposing imperialism, Angola is not alone in producing groups and parties that have made their peace with imperialism and are an obstacle to the success of the liberation struggle. If such groups have gained a prominent role in Angola it is not because of any support they have won amongst the broad masses, but rather because of the backing they enjoy from imperialism and local reaction.

IN THE SERVICE OF FOREIGN INTERESTS

The decrepit but sinister forces that support the UNITA-FNLA grouping – not least the imperialist press which serves as a powerful mouthpiece of the multi-national corporations – attempt to portray Dr Neto and the MPLA as 'doctrinaire Marxists' and 'Moscow-liners' who are not true Angolan patriots. Of course their idea of true nationalists are people who open the doors of their country to free enterprise. Jonas Savimbi says his party wants a mixed economy because 'private enterprise can bring about rapid development' (*Guardian*, 29/3/75). Projecting himself as a good nationalist he says he favours the severing of Angola's economy from that of Portugal, but this is merely to echo the call of Angola's white business community who wish to avoid the far-reaching effects of Lisbon's important nationalisation measures. Savimbi says he is a 'socialist', but that there is no similarity between his socialism and the 'doctrinaire approach' of Dr Neto. Indeed not! Mr Savimbi's 'socialism' is of the same order as that other recent convert who is now licking his wounds in Brazil – Mr Spinola! While UNITA

played an insignificant role during the armed struggle, and has little or no support among the African masses, the neo-colonialist intriguers are hoisting Savimbi into a strategic position as 'peacemaker' and 'neutralist' in the so-called feud between the MPLA and FNLA.

That other notorious 'patriot' and 'authentic freedom fighter', Holden Roberto, has never been capable of building a national movement in 'Angola. The FNLA, like its predecessors GRAE and UPA, is almost exclusively tribally based among the Bakongo people of northern Angola. Following a racist and fratricidal course from the start Holden Roberto has caused untold damage to the cause of Angolan liberation. When his activists were not blindly killing white non-combatants they were torturing and executing MPLA militants. For most of the time however Roberto's mercenaries stagnated in their Zaire-based lairs whilst the MPLA was locked in battle with Portugal's colonial troops. By blocking Angola's northern borders to the MPLA, Roberto and his mentor Mobutu hindered the armed struggle and gave the Portuguese welcome respite.

ROLE OF ZAIRE

President Mobutu has neither in the past nor at present shown much inclination to respect the rights of the Angolan people. After the murder of Patrice Lumumba and the sordid triumph of neo-colonialism in the Congo, Mobutu virtually declared war on the MPLA which he regarded as being too radical. MPLA exiles were driven from Zaire and those who fell into Mobutu's hands were thrown into filthy dungeons where many perished.

Zaire, which occupies a prime strategic position for imperialism not only with regard to Angola but for Africa south of the Sahara, has been turned into a haven of neo-colonialism and US interests by President Mobutu. Over the last twelve years the USA has advanced Mobutu $ 430 million, including $ 50 million in military aid. It is well-known that Mobutu cherishes a federalist dream of regrouping Zaire and Angola (or at least the north), including Cabinda, to become the wealthiest and most powerful axis in Africa. While he has boasted that Roberto has the means to impose his will on the independence solution and become the country's first President, Mobutu's real interest in

Angola has been eloquently clarified in *Zaire Africa*, a London-based 'digest of news and opinion', which acts as a public relations outlet for Mobutu. In its issue of December 12, 1974, *Zaire Africa* declared:

> "The prediction made in our last issue that President Mobutu would play a key role in Angola has been fulfilled by events . . . if FNLA becomes the ruling party in Angola, it will continue to depend on Zaire, not only for arms and training facilities, but politically and economically . . . Nor would it be surprising if, as the reward for his help, President Mobutu obtained the agreement of Roberto to the separation of Cabinda from the rest of Angola, and the setting up of an independent Cabindan Republic . . . A victory for FNLA owed largely to Zaire would make President Mobutu the unquestioned arbiter of Central Africa with unrivalled influence and prestige . . ."

DEFEATING THE PLOTS

The plots which have been mounting against Angolan independence are being frustrated. The unity of the people and the tried and trusted leadership of the MPLA are proving formidable obstacles.

The mass support and organisational strength of the MPLA continue to grow. Basing their strength on the worker and peasant masses, but with their progressive policy winning also the support of democratic whites, the shanty-town areas of Luanda have become a veritable MPLA stronghold. Throughout Angola MPLA committees are flourishing where the people live and work. Political education and the mobilisation of the people are proceeding in the urban areas with the same success that the MPLA achieved during the guerrilla campaigns in the countryside. Savimbi and Holden can scarcely show their faces in the African areas of Luanda and are reduced to denouncing 'the desire of the MPLA to set up a popular power' and demanding 'the dissolution of the neighbourhood commissions installed by the MPLA.'

Zaire Africa's sanguine prediction that Mobutu would play the leading role in Angola is not being fulfilled. The MPLA has not been isolated nor kept out of the transitional government and Mobutu's plan to split the movement from within has been defeated. It is now clear

that Daniel Chipenda's bid to oust Dr Neto from the MPLA leadership was with the connivance of Mobutu. Chipenda failed to wreck the MPLA's unity, and after his expulsion from the movement the leader of the so-called 'Eastern Revolt' has joined forces with Roberto. Much to the frustration of President Mobutu it was Dr Neto and not Chipenda who was present at the Algarve talks. When Chipenda led an illegal force of 3,000 armed men into eastern Angola last February they were rebuffed by MPLA and Portuguese troops and Chipenda fled the country. An attempted revolt last December by Cabinda secessionists was similarly put down. It is no mere coincidence that the activisation of FLEC (the Front for the Liberation of Cabinda) started with the beginning of the oil rush in the mid 'sixties.

As the plots are being defeated and exposed the collusion between Mobutu, Savimbi, Holden and Chipenda is growing. The imperialists, and very noticeably the South African press, are encouraging the tightening of these links. The imperialist tactics are growing more desperate, and their conspiracies will not stop at tearing Angola apart and provoking a civil war. While the FNLA is now engaging in a frontal assault aimed at liquidating MPLA cadres and supporters Jonas Savimbi is being groomed as the 'saviour' with the ability to restore peace and order. In the process Savimbi has praised Vorster as a responsible leader and said it would be realistic for Angola to cooperate economically with South Africa. He is opposed to armed struggle in Namibia and advocates detente and dialogue with South Africa (*Rand Daily Mail*, 30/4/75). In the new balance of forces in Africa the South Africans stand to benefit a great deal from a 'Congolisation' of Angola. With South African forces already massing along Angola's southern borders, Angola's Minister of the Interior, in pledging future aid 'to our brothers of SWAPO', has warned that 'South Africa is waiting for a time of internal confusion to annex the Cunene district to South West Africa' (*The Star* weekly edition, April 19, 1975).

ONE ANGOLA, ONE PEOPLE

The MPLA is warning of US-backed attempts to disrupt the unity of their country. It is certain that this interference will continue. Imperialism, the principal enemy, is tending increasingly to become the

direct enemy of the Angolan people. There is the ever-present danger of a Congo-type solution, where the US intervened under the cover of chaos to oust Belgian interests. Of course the situation today in the world, and in Africa, is immeasurably different to that of the early 'sixties. Unlike the Congo the imperialists are facing an experienced and battle-seasoned people's organisation in the MPLA. The MPLA enjoys the solidarity of the world progressive forces, the socialist countries and important African states like Tanzania and Algeria which have always given their consistent support. The OAU and all Africa must stand united at this crucial and fateful time and condemn any interference in Angola's internal affairs. There is only one Angola and the rights of her people must be respected! It is the duty of all anti-imperialists to affirm their support for the MPLA and a truly independent Angola.

Everything must be done to help bring about the independence and real liberation for which the heroic and martyred Angolan people have fought and died.

African Trade Unions-Reformist or Revolutionary?

by David Davis

The past year has seen an escalation in the international campaign by the apartheid regime and its shareholders aimed at undermining the programme of action against apartheid adopted by the 1973 ILO conference, encouraging further foreign investment in racism and drawing the NATO member states into an open military alliance against the national liberation struggle.

In its frantic efforts to buy time for consolidation, the racist regime is dusting down for re-use all the old threadbare arguments of the past. The well-worn liberal thesis that the imperatives of industrialisation are incompatible with apartheid, and Vorster's latest "give me six months and . . ." ruse are but different models of the same old con trick. The aim, as always, is to subvert the need for a firm commitment to the international labour movement in support of the national liberation struggle and the African National Congress, and to encourage the spread of reformist and opportunist policies. Not by chance is it that these attempts have increased over the past year. The joint victory of the Portuguese, Mozambican and Angolan peoples over fascism and colonialism has presented the Pretoria regime with the spectre of its ultimate defeat. Vorster's diplomatic flurries, the sudden public relations exercise conducted over the 'changes' taking place in South Africa and

the regime's rapid expansion of its military forces are its various attempts to stave off the future.

The spread of reformist ideas internationally is an aid to the apartheid regime's plans. Broadly speaking, these follow two main lines of thought: that further investment in South Africa on the part of foreign capital will hasten the process of industrialisation breaking down apartheid; and, on the part of the western labour movement, that aid to the African trade unions in South Africa in their immediate struggles is of more value than support for the liberation movements.

The basis of genuine working-class action against apartheid was laid by the resolution adopted by the Workers' Section of the ILO at the 1973 Geneva conference. This was an international decision in the fullest sense. Delegates from over 200 organisations were present, representing 180 million workers throughout the world. The final resolution, unanimously adopted by the conference, was the strongest and most widely-encompassing call to action yet agreed upon by any labour movement. The conference was unique too in that, for the first time since the Second World War, the three major international trade union confederations, the ICFTU, the WFTU and the WCL were brought together in the common struggle against apartheid.

The resolution unequivocally recognised that the economic struggle of the black worker in South Africa could not be divided from the broader struggle for political freedom. There could be no economic democracy without political democracy. Consequently, the conference called for an international campaign aimed at isolating the white regime in South Africa on all sides by means of political, economic and cultural boycotts.

It called for the withdrawal of all foreign investment from the country, a ban on emigration to South Africa, the release of all trade union and other political prisoners, an end to the migrant labour system, a general amnesty for all opponents of the regime, the lifting of all bans on the political and other organisations of the people and an end to the rule of police terror, full recognition of African trade unions, and moral and material support for the people of South Africa *through their authentic trade union and political organisations*. The conference correctly understood that the ruling white minority in South Africa would only submit to these demands, or a situation be brought about where power could be forcibly taken from them by the

people, with the assistance of a total political, economic and cultural boycott – and the call for this was the central point of the resolution.

Although they voted for the resolution, the British TUC and other western trade union movements have failed to implement these proposals. Indeed, the TUC chose to visit South Africa only four months after the Geneva conference in preparation for its own course of action on apartheid. The delegation's report, when it came, provided the opportunists in the labour movement with just the rallying post they had been seeking.

The report proposed the following action on South Africa:

* Continued opposition to British investment in South Africa '*unless* British firms there show that they are encouraging and recognising genuinely independent trade unions for African workers.'
* A 'firm declaration' against white emigration to South Africa.
* The establishment, jointly with the ICFTU, of a centre in South Africa to plan and provide funds to employ full time black union organisers.
* The establishment, also with the ICFTU, of a committee in London to 'mobilise maximum international support for African trade union organisation in South Africa' and to raise funds (£100,000) 'to solve organisational and educational problems' of black workers in South Africa.[1]

Not a word here about support for the national liberation struggle, the African National Congress or SACTU! Not a word about smashing the *basis* of apartheid, instead of tinkering with its effects! The TUC's proposals recognise only the economic aspects of the struggle in South Africa, and as such lead to the dead end of economism. What a marked reminder of Lenin's warning of times "when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity."[2]

Support for African unions is therefore being used by reformist elements in the leadership of the international labour movement as a substitute for giving support to the Geneva resolution. The pretext is that the trade union struggle is an 'alternative' route to change, instead of an indispensable part of it.

Let us examine the position of the African trade union movement in South Africa, not in isolation, as a merely quantitative growth in

membership over the past two years, but in "the sphere of relationships of *all* classes and strata to the state and the governor, the sphere of the interrelations between all classes."[3]

The 1973 strikes and the rapid organisation of a section of the African proletariat which followed in their wake produced immediate response from the three forces directly threatened – the capitalist class and its state; the white labour aristocracy; and, on the international level, from a diverse collection of organisations the aims of which all objectively converge on the need to control change in South Africa, preserve the country as a continuing area of operations for multinational capital, and as a base in their anti-socialist military strategy. These 'sergeant majors of capital in the ranks of the labour movement' are typified by the TUC report already mentioned, but there are others as well, like Christian Concern for Southern Africa. Let us rather examine the first two forces.

THE CAPITALIST CLASS AND THE STATE

The 1973 strikes presented the state with the spectre of an African proletariat struggling valiantly to gain a foothold in the 'white' cities, to break their chains and establish themselves as a stable labour force with modern living standards. In 1971 there were only 25 recorded strikes in the whole of South Africa, involving 2620 workers In 1972 there were 22 strikes, involving 3756 workers. The mass strikes of January-February 1973 encompassed more than 60,000 workers, in a wave of stoppages which spread from Durban and other parts of Natal to the Witwatersrand, East London and Port Elizabeth. These are official figures. The actual numbers are far higher.

From the regime came a desperate attempt to fragment working class organisation on a factory to factory basis, the introduction of the Bantu Labour Relations Regulation Act with its modified works and liaison committees and a joint effort with employers' associations in the rapid setting up of these committees in industry. From the start there was conflict between the choice of 'liaison' committees (with their 50% management representation) and the worker-only '*works*' committees. The draft Bill provided for the establishment of a liaison committee '*in respect of an undertaking where no works committee*

exists.'

The difference was to prove important. When certain African unions in Natal attempted to use the Act to set up works committees, employers' associations like the Natal Employers' Association and the SEIFSA (Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of SA) reacted by circulating their members with a model constitution for the liaison committee and urging them to establish these without delay. SEIFSA's model constitution for a liaison committee stated under the heading 'limitation of functions': "The Committee may only recommend a course of action through the chairman of the committee" (an employer-nominated individual) and "The committee shall not, by resolution or otherwise, reverse or amend any instruction given by management, nor can it interfere with any disciplinary action undertaken by management."[4]

At Leyland in Durban where a joint committee had been in operation for some months, management refused to abandon this for a worker-only 'works' committee. After a deadlock of four months, during which there was no discussion at all between management and its employees, Leyland brought in an official from the Department of Labour to persuade workers to form a liaison committee. Not surprisingly, his attempt failed. When management and the Department of Labour then foisted an election for the liaison committee on to the workers, they responded by returning blank ballot forms.[5]

Sporadic battles of this sort took place at factory after factory, with management and the state refusing to recognise or negotiate with African unions, at the same time imposing the 'communication' structure of the Bantu Labour Relations Regulation Act on the African workers.

Whereas only 24 registered works committees[6] and 118 liaison committees[7] were functioning at the end of 1972, by the end of May 1974, according to the *Financial Mail*, there were 1050 liaison committees and 175 works committees in existence in factories employing 350,909 and 45,215 Africans respectively.[8] This is about 5% of the country's 30,000-odd factories.[9]

Yet the African unions have continued to grow despite concerted opposition from management and the state. In July 1974 the *Financial Mail* reported that there were twenty African unions functioning, with a total membership of nearly 40,000. In addition there were two

workers benefit funds, providing funeral and sick benefits, with a membership of 22,000.[10] Other organisations providing advice to workers, information on industrial legislation, handling complaints, etc. were the Industrial Aid Society and the Urban Training project in Johannesburg, the Institute for Industrial Education in Durban, and the Western Province Workers' Advice Bureau in Cape Town.[11]

The strike wave begun in 1973 continued throughout 1974, with a total of 374 recorded stoppages, involving 57,656 Africans. A feature of these strikes was that, whereas the 1973 stoppages were situated mainly in Natal, in 1974 they were spread throughout the country – 203 strikes in the Transvaal (22,552 Africans), 25 in the Free State (2,386 Africans), 96 in Natal (18,993 Africans) and 50 in the Cape (13,725 Africans).[12]

THE WHITE LABOUR ARISTOCRACY

The reorganisation of the African proletariat has posed a threat, not only to the State and the capitalist class, but to the white labour aristocracy as well. Since 1922 white workers and the capitalist class have systematically cooperated in the exploitation of the black working class. Where conflict between the whites has taken place this has been concerned mainly with the form that white supremacy should take, and with the manner in which the benefits accruing from it should be shared among the white groups – the capitalists, the farmers and the white workers.[13] White supremacy itself has never been at question. The white working class corresponds perfectly to Lenin's description of the embourgeoised strata of the working class of the imperialist countries 'bribed out of imperialist super profits and converted into the watchdogs of capitalism and corrupters of the labour movement.'[14]

The political power of the white working class has been an essential element in the maintenance of its economic position. The Mines and Works Act, the Bantu Building Workers Act, the Industrial Conciliation Act and the Bantu Labour Act were all designed to protect the economic privileges of the white worker. In addition, the post-war economic boom and the resultant growth of an urban black proletariat posed a twin threat to the white minority.

"Politically, the racist regime was increasingly faced with the growing

challenge and potential revolutionary capacity of an urban proletariat more and more cut off from the land and tribal allegiances. Economically, new steps were considered necessary to ensure the continued production and reproduction of black labour power under conditions which would continue to favour the lowest possible wage levels."[15]

Not only were wages to be low and competition between employers for labour power to be removed, but the steady inflow of African labour into manufacturing industry and away from mining and farm labour was to be stopped. All labour legislation affecting Africans introduced by the apartheid regime has been designed to achieve these aims. The pass laws, the Bantu Urban Areas Act, the Bantu Administration Act, the Physical Planning and Utilisation of Resources Act – all serve to control African mobility, deny urban Africans all political, residential and social rights, and apportion labour power between the various sectors of the white economy, manufacturing industry and commerce, the mines and the farms at the lowest possible wage rates.

The farmers, traditionally the staunchest supporters of the racist regime, are guaranteed a settled labour force. An African born in a rural community remains classified as a farm worker irrespective of the educational qualifications he attains. He can *never* work in an urban area unless the farmer agrees to release him.[16] In 1973 the number of Africans employed in the 'white' areas on a migrant basis stood at 3,437,686[17] – 55% of the total estimated economically active African population.

The process of industrialisation and the specific policies of the white minority in South Africa have generated a vast black proletariat, stripped of the ownership of means of production and the land and possessing only its labour power for sale. Out of a total of 2,588,946 Africans employed outside agriculture and private domestic service in April 1973, *40% were classified as labourers,* while a further 20% were employed on the mines and quarries. Of the Coloureds, 24%, and of the Asians, 7% were classified as labourers. For whites the figure was *less than 1%.*[18]

The power of organised white labour has been used to secure a guarantee on the top stratum of jobs. Although the 26 job reservation orders imposed by the state potentially affect only 2.5% of the total labour force, private controls between the registered unions and employers affect a far wider spectrum. Ratios of unskilled and semi-

skilled to skilled workers, laid down in industrial council agreements and wage board determinations, and a ban by the registered unions on the training of apprentices have ensured that African workers remain cheap and unskilled. Whereas there were 222,536 white, 41,041 Coloured and 6,503 Asian artisans and apprentices employed in the metal and engineering, electrical, motor, building, printing, furniture and other trades in 1973, *not a single African artisan or apprentice was to be found*, apart from the 12,557 African artisans and apprentices registered in terms of the Bantu Building Workers' Act and permitted to work only in 'Bantu' areas.[19]

In the engineering and metallurgical industry, which employed 424,300 persons in September 1973, the government suspended its job reservation orders after the registered unions and the employers themselves agreed 'to entrench job reservation' in the industry.[20] Wage rates show the result: in September 1973 the average monthly wage for whites in the industry was R385; for Coloureds R134; for Asians R148; and for Africans R80.[21]

The organisation of an African proletariat beyond their control presents a threat to the privileged position of the white working elite. Faced with this *de facto* situation, TUCSA at its 1973 conference recommended that its affiliates establish 'parallel' unions for Africans. At its conference last year it voted to allow affiliation from African unions. Not surprisingly, there was no rush to join. The Africans have good reason to be wary.

TUCSA has traditionally pursued an opportunistic policy in regard to the African working class. On establishment in 1954 TUCSA excluded Africans; in 1959 it warmed to the idea of organising them; in 1962 it decided to accept African union affiliates; in 1966 it embarked upon a campaign to organise Africans; in 1967 it took an about-turn and once again decided to exclude them; in April 1968 it took another about-face by reversing the 1967 decision; and finally in 1969 it excluded Africans once more.[22]

The African proletariat will not be fooled by TUCSA's pretences. At the very time the leaders of TUCSA were expressing their concern for the African workers, the organisation was engaged in a campaign to undermine the African unions which had arisen, beyond its control, in Natal.[23] When TUCSA last tried its hand at 'organising' Africans (in the engineering industry), it cost on the average R45 for every member

recruited. The British TUC reported that there had been "a certain suspicion among black workers that the recruitment campaign served the interests of the registered unions rather than their own."[24] How could they feel otherwise when the white unions are joint partners with the capitalist class in their exploitation?

THE TASKS AHEAD

The African factory worker is the foremost representative of the entire exploited population. The economic confrontations between workers and their employers will inevitably force home the realisation that the oppressors are not some one capitalist *but the entire capitalist class.*

"Strikes . . . teach the workers to unite; they show them that they can struggle against the capitalists only when they are united; strikes teach the workers to think of the struggle of the whole working class against the whole class of factory owners and against the arbitrary police government. This is the reason that the socialists call strikes 'a school of war', a school in which the workers learn to make war on their enemies for the liberation of the whole people, of all who labour, from the yoke of government officials and from the yoke of capital."[25]

A school of war is however not war itself. Strikes are only *one aspect* of the working class movement, only one form of the struggle. The task of revolutionaries within the labour movement must be to utilise the sparks of '*trade union*' consciousness, which the economic struggle ignites among the workers, for the purpose of raising the workers to the level of *political consciousness*. In South Africa the achievement of political freedom is the *vital task* of the black working class, because without it they cannot hope to improve their economic position. As SACTU has stated: "One cannot separate land poverty from migrant labour, or migrant labour from cheap labour, or low wages from the use of the reserves or Bantustans as the ostensible agricultural base of this working force which is part peasant, part (semi-) industrial working class. Neither can we separate employment practice in mines and in industry from government policy and industrial and labour legislation. They draw one upon the other and grow out of one another."[26]

The necessity of combatting reformist ideas within the African trade

union movement, of countering the attempts by the Lucy Mvubelo's, BAWU and the Urban Training Project to confine the workers to a purely economic struggle, to keep 'politics' out of the unions, is of the utmost urgency. Their attempts must be exposed for the ideological defence of white supremacy and capitalism they are. The efforts of foreign organisations like the British TUC to buy their way into African trade unionism through groups like the Urban Training Project (described in the TUC report as a 'modest and cautious' organisation)[27] must be considered both inside South Africa and abroad.

Genuine support for the African working class struggle in South Africa *cannot* be separated from support for the national liberation struggle of the people, led by the African National Congress. Support for the national liberation struggle is the *first* priority for all who oppose apartheid and the 1973 ILO resolution clearly laid the basis for this support. The task of the international labour movement now *is to implement this resolution.*

Notes

1 *Trade Unionism in South Africa: Report of a Delegation from the TUC.* pp. 39 and 40.
2 Lenin: *What is to be Done?* Progress Publishers, Moscow 1973, p.25.
3 Ibid., p.79.
4 Johannesburg *Sunday Times* 23/12/73.
5 *South African Labour Bulletin,* Institute of Industrial Education, Durban. Vol.1, No.3, pp.12-14.
6 Hansard (3) Cols 160-161 22/8/74.
7 International Defence and Aid Information Service, Jan-June 1973. Col.96.
8 *Financial Mail,* Johannesburg, 19/7/74.
9 *Rand Daily Mail*, 18/10/74.
10 *Financial Mail,* Johannesburg. 19/7/74.
11 South African Institute of Race Relations, Annual Survey 1974. pp.322-324. Again the real figures are far higher.
12 Hansard (1) Col. 50 7/2/75.
13 See R. Johnstone. "Is Economic Growth Disintegrating Apartheid?" *Sechaba*, Vol.4, Nos.11/12.
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15 Yusuf Dadoo "The Crisis of Apartheid" *World Marxist Review* Feb. 1975. pp. 37-38.
16 South African Institute of Race Relations, Annual Survey 1974, p.175.
17 Ibid. p.245.
18 Department of Labour "Manpower Survey No.10"

19 Ibid.
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21 Figures calculated from pp.267-8 South African Institute of Race Relations Annual Survey, 1974.
22 A. Hepple *South Africa: Workers Under Apartheid* International Defence and Aid Fund. 1971. p.73.
23 R.E. Braverman "African Trade Unions and the Liberation Struggle" *The African Communist* No.60, p.54.
24 *Trade Unionism in South Africa: Report of a delegation from the TUC.* p.18.
25 Lenin *On Strikes* in *Lenin on Trade Unions,* Progress Publishers, Moscow. 1970, p.65.
26 Ruskin College and the Institute of Industrial Education. Paper produced by the Ruskin Students' Association, p.23.
27 See page 22 of the TUC's report.

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The Coloured People Say "No" to Apartheid

by C. Domingo

The result of the March 1975 elections for seats on the 60-member, government-controlled and created Coloured People's Representative Council (CPRC) holds no joy for the Vorster regime's policy of Separate Development in general and in particular as it applies to the Coloured people of South Africa.

The Council was created as a consequence of legislation by successive Nationalist Party governments to destroy the limited political rights of the Coloured people and bring them within the rigid orbit of the policy of Separate Development.

The right to elect members to the central parliament on a common voters' role granted to the Coloured people of the Cape and Natal by the Act of Union – which legalised white minority racist rule in South Africa in 1910 – was abolished by the Nationalist Party through the Coloured Separate Representation of Voters Act first introduced in 1951 and, after legal battles, finally enacted in 1956. Henceforth those Coloureds eligible to vote could elect white candidates to represent 'the special interests of the Coloured people' in the all-white central parliament. Both racial and political considerations motivated this Act. The Nationalist Party came into power in 1948 on the basis of an appeal for white domination and the crudest form of racism. Added to

this was the consistent anti-Nationalist Party character of the 'Coloured Vote' and the fact that the Nationalist Party then had a majority of only three. The policy of Separate Development then being formulated could brook no exceptions. In 1968 the passing of the Separate Representation of Voters Amendment Act finally destroyed the right of the Coloured people to elect any members to the all-white Parliament. Henceforth the 'special interests of the Coloured people' would be pursued by the Coloureds themselves through the CPRC.

Which Coloureds and what 'special interests' were clearly enunciated by the Act. The Council would be granted powers to deal with education, social welfare, pensions, local government in Coloured group areas and rural communities – all subject to the policy of apartheid, under strict supervision of the Department of the Minister of Coloured Affairs, who had the powers of interference and veto. The Council was to consist of 60 members – 20 appointed by the government and 40 elected with the Minister appointing the Chairman.

Government thinking on the direct elections of two-thirds of the Council members relied heavily on two factors:

1, The Coloured People's Congress (CPC), the only movement of the Coloured people to have emerged espousing the revolutionary programme of the Congress Alliance, was rendered politically ineffective through arrests, detentions and the banning of leaders and cadres, a fate which it shared with the other members of the Congress Alliance as a result of the terror campaign of the fascist regime after Sharpeville and the commencement of the armed struggle on 16 December 1961. (The A.N.C. was banned in 1960).

2. It relied on the formation of a number of Coloured pro-apartheid parties to dominate the elections with its material backing.

The first elections, held in September 1969, proved to be disastrous for the Vorster government's scheme. Although the elections were held within the strait-jacket of a police-state society; under conditions of intimidation by white bosses in the industrial centres; under constant surveillance and harassment by the Special Branch – all to ensure the 'right result' – the Coloured people voted in favour of the newly-constituted Labour Party, who fought the elections on an anti-apartheid platform! Of the 40 elected seats, it captured 26. This was the first taste of defeat for the Vorster regime and its policy, inflicted by the Coloured people. However, the nomination of 20 pro-apartheid

lackeys, the majority of whom had been defeated candidates of the pro-apartheid Federal Party, including its leader Tom Swartz (also appointed chairman of the Council), ensured a 'Vorster majority' within the CPRC.

ANOTHER DEFEAT

The March elections of 1975, held after the Minister for Coloured Affairs was forced to prorogue the Council following the successful no-confidence motion by the Labour Party in the policy of Separate Development 'and all its institutions, including the Coloured Representative Council', was an even more serious defeat for the Vorster regime. Of the 40 elected seats the Labour Party, which on this occasion made its main platform the abolition of the Council, won 31 seats. Even if the 20 nominated seats were to go to supporters of the regime, the Labour Party would now command an absolute majority. (And in fact the Minister made his nominations on an all-party basis.) What is equally significant is that the Federal Party won only 8 seats this time with the remaining 1 seat going to an Independent.

To underline the absolute contempt of the Coloured people for the policy and institution designed to perpetuate their oppression, 120,000 fewer registered voters bothered to cast their votes, a reduction of almost 20% as compared with 1969. The election was an unequivocal indication that the Coloured people have no faith in the political future charted out for them by the white minority racist regime and an emphatic rejection of self-administered oppression!

The development of this political position by the Coloured people assumes tremendous force if viewed historically in 2 main respects. The first is the relatively (compared to the African and Indian oppressed) special status within the racist system traditionally accorded to the Coloured people by successive white supremacist governments prior to the Nationalist Party's coming to power in 1948. According to the 1962 Programme of the SACP – the Road to South African Freedom –

> "The white ruling group extended various concessions – such as qualified franchise, trade union rights, property rights – in order to prevent the emergence of a Coloured national consciousness and the foundation of a united front of oppressed non-white

peoples for equality and the ending of white colonialism. This policy was not without success."

Alex La Guma, an executive member of the Coloured People's Congress, underlines the point:

". . . that fraud (qualified franchise rights) kept alive for many Coloured people the illusion that they were not part of the oppressed non-white majority and that their future lay with the white rulers . . ." *(Sechaba, Volume 3, No.12).*

The second factor which influenced the political response of the Coloured people to their national and class oppression was the assumption to leadership over a long period of petit-bourgeois and intellectual elements of both left and right opportunism.

"The pioneer Coloured political movement, the African People's Organisation (APO), conducted militant campaigns and pursued a radical united front policy, but this tradition was not maintained. For many years, leadership of the Coloured people's organisations and trade unions was dominated by middle class elements, who either collaborated openly in the maintenance of white supremacy or – under the cover of wordy denunciations of Herrenvolkism* – preached a policy of abstention from political activity and hostility to the African National liberation movement."

(SACP Programme)

The operation of these two factors in the main conditioned the political response of substantial sections of the Coloured people away from the mainstream of a national liberation struggle based on the unity of all the oppressed.

The attacks by the Nationalist Government against their 'special status', the influence of the radical, mass-based struggles led by the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, the South

* A reference to the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) a Trotskyite movement which throughout this period contented itself with attacking the movement for National Liberation headed by the ANC, whilst not engaging in political struggle itself in the belief that denouncing white supremacy rule was sufficient.

African Congress of Trade Unions and the South African Communist Party for a radical transformation of South African society and the emergence of the Coloured People's Congress (CPC) under a leadership which identified and allied itself with the struggle for national liberation of all the oppressed peoples, had the effect of a return by sections of the Coloured people to their earlier militant tradition of struggle.

Undoubtedly the Coloured Labour Party is drawing on this militant response which has its objective basis in the character of a racist-capitalist society.

The fact of national and class oppression which the Coloured people share in common with the African and Indian people, though varying in degree, is an objective fact which is inescapable.

The Coloured population of South Africa numbers some 2,300,000 out of a total population of 24,887,000. By 1970 the total labour force of the Republic was 7,371,000 of whom 750,000 was Coloured. (*Finance and Trade Review* – December 1974. Prof. J.L. Sadie, University of Stellenbosch).

Of these 133,000 were employed as agricultural labourers (mainly in the Cape Province) under feudal conditions with no machinery to negotiate about wages or working conditions, the barest minimum wages and extremely inadequate welfare, health and education provisions.

These agricultural labourers, historically tied to areas of the Cape with the development of the wine-producing industry, are equally tied to the white farm owners in a feudal type relationship. Access to them and these areas is governed by a host of regulations, amongst others, the regulation preventing meetings with groups larger than 5 in number and then only with the consent of the Minister of Coloured Affairs.

Of the remaining 617,000 approximately 36,000 were classified as 'unspecified, unemployed peasants'. The balance of the Coloured working class was engaged largely in the secondary and tertiary industries. Although these workers have a right to belong to registered trade unions, they do not have the right in practice to negotiate wage settlements with bosses, nor agitate for better working conditions.

The actual practice of their trade union 'rights' has in fact been conducted by the white-dominated, government-supporting, Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA). And TUCSA's policy has always been to safeguard the interests of white workers first. Thus in

any pay settlement within an industry, policy has always been to negotiate the best possible terms for white workers within that particular union, and to settle for token improvements or increases for the Coloured and Indian workers.

Super profits, which have their source in the double nature of exploitation – class and national – are of course only reaped through super exploitation of the labour power of black workers. Coloured workers form a substantial part of the black working class. Poverty wages for the majority has always been industrial policy with the ruling class.

The level of wages is reflected directly in the fact that nationally, approximately 60% of Coloured families live below the 'poverty datum line' – an arbitrarily determined wage sufficient merely to enable a family of five to survive on the barest possible essentials.

MASS DEPRIVATION

In every other sphere of their lives – educational, health, social security, recreation, medical care and housing – government policy has been aimed at depressing the quality of life for the vast majority of the Coloureds.

The effect of the Group Areas Act (to enforce residential segregation) has resulted in the uprooting of 73,178 Coloured families by December 1973, with another 49,145 families still to be removed – thousands of them being forced to move from areas where their families had lived for centuries.

A survey by the University of Stellenbosch found the following conditions in Coloured areas:

1 small dwelling for every nine people.
1 water tap for 10 houses or 90 people.
1 public telephone for a community of 20,000.

Coloured mortality, according to the South African Medical Journal, gave life expectancy at birth as 44.82 for Coloured males and 44.77 for females.

The incidence of serious crime, especially among Coloured youth, is high and alcoholism has become an acute problem among the Coloured

people.

Educationally the policy of 'Coloured education' ensures an inadequate supply of funds and a high drop-out rate. In 1973 lack of classes forced some 65,867 pupils to be taught in double shifts involving fewer hours of schooling.

Higher education, as for African and Indian students, is conducted in racially exclusive University Colleges strictly controlled by government appointed principals and staff imbued with Nationalist Party ideology. Student activity is severely regimented and proscribed by a host of regulations. Hence the upsurge in mass student activity, especially since the formation of the militant Black South African Students' Organisation (SASO).

NEW PERSPECTIVES

The victory of the Labour Party is a sure sign of the resurgence of militancy among the Coloured people and a reflection .of the mass upsurge amongst the black oppressed in general.

Clearly it has significance for both the Vorster regime and the movement of national liberation headed by the ANC.

For the Vorster regime the claim can no longer be made with any credibility that its policy of Separate Development is both acceptable to and in the best interest of the Coloured people. At a time when the regime is attempting to sell its fraudulent detente policy, the destruction of this fraudulent institution for oppression has been an acute embarrassment internationally. No doubt the Vorster government will attempt to keep this racist structure of oppression alive, despite the Labour Party and the Coloured people. It can only do so with greater repression. Things will not be the same again.

For the national liberation movement its significance can only be properly assessed in the light of the developing crisis of apartheid. The massive, nationwide strike wave of black workers in the teeth of fascist terror; the militancy displayed by black students throughout all the campuses; the resurgence amongst all sections of the oppressed peoples of an anti-racist and democratic character; the manifest inability of the racist regime to reverse the tendency towards permanent urbanisation within 'white South Africa' of a black proletariat – these are all

reflections of the all-round sharpening of the contradictions in South African society. The source of these contradictions and the resultant national and class oppression of the black people lies in the nature of the socio-economic structures of the country based on the capitalist mode of production with its special racial-colonialist character. Only the determined, united, revolutionary struggle of the liberation movement of the black peoples led by the ANC is capable of bringing about a radical transformation of South African society.

The Coloured Labour Party has won a victory. It is a victory of the Coloured masses. The use of the legal platform afforded it is, however, severely limited by the racist-fascist character of the Vorster regime. In the final analysis it will be the oppressed Coloured masses in alliance with the African and Indian oppressed masses, joined by all anti-racist democratic forces, united within a single national struggle, that will impose the ultimate sanction on the tyranny of white minority racist rule in South Africa.

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How Czechoslovakia Solves the National Question

by Frantisek Havlicek

Dedicated to the Thirtieth Anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Army.

This year the peoples of Czechoslovakia are commemorating the 30th anniversary of the culmination of their liberation struggle against Hitler fascism and of their liberation by the Soviet army. Simultaneously, they are evaluating with justified pride the results of their post-war journey of thirty years: through selfless struggle of the working class, led by the CPC, a new, really popular rule has been established in Czechoslovakia and a socialist society has been built up.

As the leading force of this society, the Communist Party professes in its programme the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. This fact was particularly highlighted by the XIVth Congress of the CPC. The report on the Party's activities delivered by comrade G. Husak says: "The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was formed in our State of several nationalities as a united internationalist party of the working class and an integral part of the international Communist movement. Its internationalism was in keeping with genuine patriotism."

History has taught us that any violation of the principle of proletarian internationalism in the activity of the Communist Party leads immediately to the weakening of the international position of the Party and of our State and places the socialist achievements in the country in immediate jeopardy The reason for this is that proletarian internationalism is one of the fundamental principles of the scientific world outlook of the working class and the cornerstone of practical, realistic socialism. Therefore any tendencies towards the weakening of proletarian internationalism threaten immediately the entire socialist structure.

In the new historical conditions of the epoch of imperialism, V.I. Lenin elaborated the Marxist teaching of internationalism. Following the ideologic and organizational bankruptcy of the Second International, the Bolshevik Party headed by Lenin united the sound forces of the working class under the banner of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, created the ideological, tactical and organisational foundations of the Third International – a genuinely proletarian and communist one. Within its framework Communist parties began to be formed out of left wings of social democratic parties.

Such was the situation also in the case of the CPC. The revolutionary workers' movement understood, after the experience of the years 1918-1920, that an ideological, political and organizational break with reformism and the establishment of a party of their own which is conscious of its being a class-oriented proletarian party, are the prerequisites for victory over the bourgeoisie.

A necessary precondition for the development of such a party is its cooperation with other revolutionary vanguards of the international proletariat. Therefore already at the founding congress of the CPC in May 1921, it was emphasized: the Party congress solemnly declares its decision to accede unconditionally to the Third International in Moscow.

Through this act right at the foundation of the CPC the Czechoslovak Communists responded unambiguously to the appeal of the Third International's Executive Committee which had stressed: nationalism can be routed only by raising against it the flag of internationalism, by uniting the workers of all nations throughout the world into one party.

The principle of proletarian internationalism thus requires all Communists to view the revolutionary movement in every country, the victory of a proletarian revolution and the construction of socialism and communism as a component part of the uniform world revolutionary process.

THE NATIONAL QUESTION

One of the criteria of proletarian internationalism, which shows how a Communist party is applying internationalism in practice, is its approach to the implementation of the principles of Leninism on the national question.

Already at its second congress in the autumn of 1924, in the resolution on the National Question, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia proclaimed the slogan of the right of peoples to self-determination, including separation. The resolution stressed that the Czech Communists must underline the right of peoples to self-determination, whereas the Slovak, German and the other national minority Communists have the duty to act jointly with the Czech working class in the class struggle.

In view of the fact that pre-war Czechoslovakia as a state subordinated to the western imperialist powers participated in the anti-Soviet policy of the international bourgeoisie which, under certain circumstances, could lead to Czechoslovakia s participation in an anti-Soviet war, the Fifth Congress of the CPC placed in the forefront of the Party's activities the struggle against the danger of an imperialist war, in defence of the Soviet Union, for the preparation of a social revolution in Czechoslovakia.

The Leninist tenet of the unity of national and international interests found a particularly clear expression in the Party's activities at the time of the fascist threat to the Czechoslovak Republic. The elaboration and espousal of the idea of people's defence of the Republic against fascism belongs to the most glorious chapters in the history of the CPC; it testifies to the fact that the Gottwald leadership of the Party understood and pursued the Party's policy as a science and an art, that, in the Czechoslovak conditions, it was creatively applying the decisions of the VIIth Congress of the Communist International.

At its VIIth Congress the CPC stated unambiguously that it stood

for the defence of democracy and of the Republic against fascism. This stand was not a retreat from its principled proletarian revolutionary internationalist positions, because the defence of democracy and independence of Czechoslovakia against Hitler fascism corresponded with the interests of the proletariat and the popular masses both in Czechoslovakia and on the international scale. The aim of fascism, after all, was to seize Czechoslovakia, to destroy revolutionary workers' organizations, to liquidate even the bourgeois democratic freedoms, to make Czechoslovakia a starting place for a military attack on the Soviet Union. Therefore it was in the interest of the Czechoslovak and international proletariat to defend the Czechoslovak Republic against Hitler.

In the defence of the Republic, however, it was impossible to rely on the bourgeoisie, but it was necessary to organise people's defence. The leading role of the CPC in the struggle against Hitler fascism created simultaneously the prerequisites for the Communist Party, the vanguard of the proletariat, to become at the same time also the leading force of the peoples of Czechoslovakia.

A consistent and resolute defence of the Republic required, however, that the country be a mother to all its peoples and national minorities, so that all of them would be convinced of the necessity of defending Czechoslovakia against Hitler. For years the Communists fought against the Benes theory of Czechoslovakism and for the full recognition of the integrity of the Slovak people.

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia showed that the best conditions for the development of the Czechoslovak state as well as of the Czech and Slovak peoples would be provided if the Czechs and Slovaks lived in this State like two fraternal, equal peoples. On this basis the Party worked out a "Plan for the Economic, Social and Cultural Advancement of Slovakia" which was then elaborated at the Party's conference at Banska Bystrica in the spring of 1937. To the detriment of the cause, the elaboration of the Plan was delayed so that it could not have a more pronounced impact on the formation of a broad popular movement for the defence of the Republic on the basis of a really equal arrangement of the relations between Czechs and Slovaks in a common Czechoslovak State.

As in the pre-Munich period, at the time of Munich and after it, in the entire period of Hitlerite occupation, throughout the whole time of unheard of subjugation of the Czechs and Slovaks, the Communist

Party stood at the head of the fighters for the restoration of national freedom of our peoples and of their State sovereignty. In the most difficult times for our peoples, the CPC, which Czechoslovak reactionaries had been persecuting for years as an anti-national party, presented itself as the most consistent fighter for the restoration of the Czechoslovak Republic and the freedom of its peoples. The Party's consistent patriotism was thus inseparably connected with its internationalism, with its foreign policy orientation on the Soviet Union, the best friend of all freedom-loving nations.

That is also why the CPC was the only force capable of formulating the programme and the line of the further development of the Republic following the defeat of German fascism. All the major, substantial ideas contained in the Government Programme of Kosice had been prepared, proposed and pushed through by the CPC at the moment when, as a result of the victorious advances of the Red Army and the upsurge of the national liberation struggle, the prospects of the post-war arrangement in Central Europe began to take shape.

The international character of the post-war policy of the CPC, the unity of its national and international tasks, are attested by the fact that the Gottwald leadership orientated the Party, the working class as well as the broad masses of our people towards the consolidation of the unity of Czechs and Slovaks, stressing at the same time the significance of close ties and friendship with the Soviet Union, with the progressive forces of the world.

Following the victory in our country of the socialist revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the principal task of our working class is to consolidate this victory through the construction of a new social system and to demonstrate thus the major advantages of socialism over capitalism to the working people of the whole world.

Therefore the CPC, together with other Communist parties, rejects resolutely the Trotskyist argumentation, adopted recently by the Mao Tse-tung group, alleging that the construction of socialism and communism proves that the socialist States and their Communist parties are, in that process, forgetting their international obligations. The exact opposite is true. Building up socialism and communism, the working people of the world socialist community are consolidating the political and economic power not only of their socialist motherlands, but of the

entire world socialist system.

The CPC does not, however, limit its international tasks only to the construction of socialism in its own country, but is conscious of its obligation to grant moral and material assistance to the revolutionary movement in the capitalist and developing countries. The advancement of our socialist economy enables us to grant such assistance.

Being aware of its international duty, the CPC maintains comradely contacts with the Communist Party of South Africa and has great respect and sympathies for its heroic struggle for the freedom and independence of the South African people.

DEFENCE OF SOCIALISM

The greatest historic achievement of the international working class and the working people of all countries is the world socialist community which, together with the international working class and with all the revolutionary forces, determines the general direction of humanity's development. Therefore the defence of the socialist countries is one of the most important international duties of every Communist party.

It must be pointed out in this connection that the CPC not only provides international assistance, but that it also receives abundant help from the international Communist movement and from the countries of the world socialist community. We shall never forget that it was the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and V.I. Lenin who helped our Communist Party in its beginnings. We shall never forget the assistance which the CPC received for a number of years from the Communist International. We shall never forget the years of World War II, particularly the years 1944-1945, when the Soviet Army provided substantial assistance, even at the cost of many lives of Soviet people, to the Slovak National Uprising, to the national liberation struggle in Moravia and Bohemia and, finally, to the struggling Prague. Forever will remain written in the Party annals the assistance of our socialist friends who, in August 1968, understood the apprehensions of Czechoslovak Communists for the cause of socialism in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, complied with the appeals for help of Party and Government representatives, of many Communists and collectives of workers and provided international assistance to Czechoslovakia which saved our

country from civil war and counter-revolution and made it possible to preserve the achievements of socialism.

The CPC is fulfilling with honour the task embodied in its Statute: to be an integral part of the international Communist and Workers' movement. It is contributing actively to the strengthening of its unity on principles of Marxism-Leninism. In its entire activities it is implementing the ideas of proletarian internationalism.

Together with the other socialist countries, side by side with the Soviet Union, we are trying to contribute to the solution of current international issues – to a successful conclusion of the all-European conference on security and cooperation, to the transformation of Europe into a continent of durable peace, to a substantial expansion of mutually beneficial international economic contacts, to the expansion of detente from Europe into the whole world, to the removal of the still existing hotbeds of tension and conflicts.

The CPC fully backs the view that the struggle for the introduction of the policy of peaceful coexistence of States with different social systems calls for constant cooperation among Communist parties, for their consultations and meetings and for collective analyses of the topical issues of the present time on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

At the present time, more than ever in the past, it is possible to influence the course of events in Europe in the interest of peace and the complete removal of the danger of war, in the interest of all the working people. Only the Communist parties, guided in their activities by the theory of Marxism-Leninism, are able to explain to the masses that the capitalist system is the source of their social suffering. Only the Communist parties, associating 25 million people in Europe, are capable of combining the struggle against war and the militarization of the national economy with the defence of the economic and political interests of the working people.

The International Communist movement has grown into a mighty and the most influential political force of the present time. There are 89 Communist parties uniting more than 50 million people. There is no other force in the world which could, as to numbers, strength of theory and political influence on the life of the society, match the Communist and Workers' parties.

These parties owe their success to their faithfulness to Marxist-Leninist theory and the principles of proletarian internationalism.

Resolute defence of the unity of the international Communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism is therefore an essential prerequisite for the further success of the Communist parties in their struggle for peace and social progress, for a successful solution of the tasks of the socialist revolution and the construction of socialism and communism. For that reason, no actions are admissible that could weaken this unity.

The CPC fights against all manifestations of revisionism representing a danger for the unity of the world Communist movement, especially in those cases which are connected with manifestations of nationalism and anti-sovietism. As a firm component part of the international Communist movement, the CPC subscribes proudly to the fundamental mission of Communists to be a vanguard of all the truly revolutionary and progressive action in the world.

French Communists to Tackle Apartheid

The following joint communique has been issued by the French Communist Party and the South African Communist Party.

At the invitation of the French Communist Party, a delegation of the South African Communist Party visited France during the second half of April 1975.

During this visit, the delegation was able to visit the Federation of Hauts-de-Seine and to acquaint itself with the Party's activity at local level and in factories. It met the Party group in the Thomson factory at Gennevilliers. A fruitful exchange of views took place between the South African communists and the communist militants at the factory which, together with the whole of the Thomson group, does a large part of its business with South Africa.

The delegation was also received at *L'Humanite* and at *France Nouvelle.* It was agreed that information should be expanded to the greatest possible extent in the press on the subjects of the realities in South Africa and the various aspects (political, economic, military, sporting . . .) of collaboration between the French government and the racist regime of Pretoria.

Discussions took place at the Central Committee office, where the

delegation was greeted by Gaston Plissonnier, member of the Political Bureau and secretary of the Central Committee. The participants in the discussions consisted of three representatives of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party and on the French side Marcel Zaidner, Central Committee member, Martin Verlet and Francis Legal, members of the Foreign Affairs section. They led to a broad and fraternal exchange of views on the development of the struggle in our respective countries and on the international situation. Particular :tention was paid to the solidarity which unites the working class and ıe population of our country with the liberation movement of the outh African people, as well as to the conditions under which it can e further reinforced.

In a world on the move, profound changes are taking place in the ituation of the African continent. These reflect the new relationship ıf world forces, in which the balance is increasingly favourable to ıeaceful co-existence and detente. New conditions, more favourable to he struggle for freedom and to social progress, are coming into :xistence. In Southern Africa, the achievement of independence by Mozambique and Angola (the result of victorious struggle by the freedom fighters of those countries as well as of the democratic advances in Portugal) creates a new situation. The oppressive racist regimes of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe see their position crumbling. Vorster and the upholders of apartheid, while striving to break out of the international isolation in which they have been placed and to revive the policy of 'dialogue' with the African states, have been forced into certain retreats and on to the defensive. The Pretoria regime, however, as witness the intensification of its Bantustan policy and of its acts of repression, has certainly decided not to yield on any of the fundamentals of its policies of racial oppression and exploitation. It makes apartheid the instrument of capitalist exploitation in its country.

The liberation struggle is developing on a large scale. Throughout the black population, resistance to national oppression and to exploitation is growing. Since 1972, activity among the African working class has shown a new spirit, notably in the course of a number of strikes. Resistance to apartheid is growing among the youth. The Coloured and Indian populations are showing a more determined opposition, and this is also winning support among some sections of

the white population.

In spite of difficult conditions of illegality and repression, the national movement, led by the ANC, is experiencing great growth. The SACP, which participates in this movement, has succeeded recently in making substantial progress in its organisation and activity.

The Pretoria regime enjoys the support of the main imperialist countries. In this respect, France plays a pre-eminent part, and helps to make the SA Republic a bastion of imperialism. The sale of French arms to South Africa continues. Military and nuclear co-operation is developing. Economic contacts are growing. Political relations are as cordial as they could be. Sporting exchanges are looked upon with favour. The French government has thus become substantially and shamefully responsible for maintaining an oppressive racist regime in power and profiting from it, though the policy of apartheid arouses strong opposition among the French people.

The two delegations rejoice in the strengthening of the bonds of friendship and solidarity between our two parties, resulting from this visit. This strengthening will lead in particular to the strengthening of anti-apartheid protest in France. The French Communist Party will take action to make the true face of apartheid known to French public opinion. It will work to enlarge the solidarity of our people with the struggle of the South African people. It will intensify its efforts to compel the authorities to abandon an attitude which is dishonourable for France and contrary to the interests of our peoples.

70th Birthday of Moses Kotane

August 9, 1975, marks the 70th birthday of the general secretary of the South African Communist Party, Moses Kotane. His life spans three great divides which mark the past 50 years of South Africa's battle for freedom: first the inward-looking struggles to produce an ideology to resolve the problems of class and national orientation; then the period of mass popular struggle, from the late 1930s until 1961; and lastly, the present period of illegal, clandestine and often armed confrontation with the state.

Moses Kotane – perhaps more than any other single figure of the time – planted his imprint on all three periods from within the leading cores of all three of the great pillars of the freedom struggle – the black workers' trade unions, the African National Congress and the Communist Party.

His has been a unique role as befits his unique personal characteristics of stubborn determination, of unswerving loyalty to the cause of his people, and of an original intellect unafraid to break out in new directions. All those attributes persist now, on his 70th birthday, even though a stroke has deprived him of mobility and kept him hospitalised in Moscow for the past six years.

To mark his birthday, and as a tribute to our great comrade, general secretary of our party for 36 years, and our constant aide and guide, we publish below extracts from a biography written by Brian Bunting which is shortly to be published by Inkululeko Publications.

To Moses Kotane we send our greetings, regards and best wishes for the future.

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Chapter 3
The New Recruits

It was while he was working at Quinn's Bakery that Kotane was first involved in "the movement". Listening to a speaker at a meeting of the African National Congress at the Market Square in Johannesburg in 1928, Kotane heard mention of a "Book of Life" in which was inscribed the names of all those who had rendered a service to their people. It was a picturesque way of referring to the membership roll of the African National Congress, and Kotane thought: "If there is a Book of Life why should I be left out?" So he joined on the spot. The name of the speaker with the gift of language was Aaron Kgwathe – a name which has not lingered on in the South African history books. "People came and went in those days", says Kotane. Some who were prominent one day had faded away by the next roll-call. "I too might have faded away if I had not joined the Communist Party", said Kotane years later.

He found ANC activity at that time somewhat frustrating. "You went to meetings and you protested but you learned nothing", he said. The ANC did not seem to have a target. The leading members he met at the time included the Rev. Z. Mahabane, a past president; Moretsele, Mvavaza and Daniel Letanka, the editor of the ANC organ *Abantu Batho*. They seemed middle class or intellectual, lacking the common touch – people with whom he couldn't identify.

He was still restless, burning with the desire "to get on". But where to? At the bakery the routine was dull and boring. He packed cakes in boxes which he made out of cardboard and strips of wood. They made good boxes in those days – he still remembers parcelling up one cake destined for an address in Europe. But the wages were low. One day one of the white workers said to him: "You are doing white man's work". He did not mean to imply that Kotane was entitled to a white man's wages, but was both taunting Kotane for having a soft job and expressing a vague resentment at it. One day people came to the factory to organise the workers and, ever willing to explore new avenues of advancement, Kotane enrolled. The union was one of those founded by the Communist Party after the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union had expelled the Communists from its ranks, and was run by party veteran T.W. Thibedi and Piet Motshegare. The union was still very young, having been launched only in February of that year (1928), but Kotane was impressed with the activity of Thibedi who, he said, "scurried all over the place all the time like a mouse"; he was always busy and knew everything that was going on. It was through him that Kotane learnt about the Communist Party night school run by Charles Baker at 41a Fox Street, and straightaway joined it.

"It was at that night school where English was taught to me in the right way and where many English terms which I could not understand clearly from dictionaries were explained to me", he wrote later.

"It was there that many things and concepts were made clear to me, and where I began to understand the capitalist society, its class divisions and national oppression and exploitation".

In 1926 a country Party member giving his impressions of the work of the Party in Johannesburg, said:

"One thing struck me very deeply and that was the Native study class. Here the real wage-slaves are being enlightened in the direction of literacy. Here in the slum area, in a 'hall' fitted with benches and so-called tables, gather big hefty pupils to listen to, swallow and digest the words of their teachers. In the vague and gloomy light of a few lamps and candles there sit those dark masses before whom one day the great capitalists will tremble and beg for mercy. With backs bent, intent on study, with a craving and desire for knowledge not equalled among whites, they are gaining the knowledge which is power and which will one day help them to accomplish the social revolution in conjunction

Moses Kotane

with their white fellow-workers".

It was through the school and his trade union and political experiences that Kotane came to learn that for the individual African in South Africa there is no prospect of advancement, that individual ambition leads nowhere. No matter how successful you might be, no matter how much learning or money you might accumulate, in the white dominated society you were still treated like a "boy" – the contemptuous term used by whites when referring to Africans, irrespective of their age. Not that there were many wealthy or learned Africans about in those days – a tiny handful compared with the mass of unskilled and unschooled labourers. But even for the few there was no freedom. The more he studied and experienced in his own life, the more the determination grew in Kotane's breast to devote his life to the liberation of his people, which was the only way he could liberate himself. For him and for thousands of others at that time and in the years to come, individual ambition and social service were fused in an indissoluble unity. Politics became a way of life, the only way of life from which he could derive any satisfaction.

1928 was the year in which the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union, which had flourished so spectacularly in the earlier years of the decade, finally disintegrated. Its application to affiliate to the country's premier trade union centre, the S.A. Trades Union Congress, was rejected; its Natal branch under A.W.G. Champion broke away to form the ICU *yase* Natal. The ICU's dominant figure Clements Kadalie had lost his militancy and was flirting with the white liberals in search of respectability. Kotane was at one time tempted to join the ICU, which at its peak boasted 100,000 members and was in a position to negotiate with government, but after attending a meeting addressed by Kadalie, he felt it sounded too good to be true. Kadalie, he judged, was not even a demagogue, whose rhetoric could rouse the masses to action. He was all sound and fury signifying nothing. Under discussion at the meeting was Justice Minister Pirow's Native Administration Bill ostensibly designed to outlaw the incitement of racial hostility, but intended in the main to curb black political activity. "When Pirow passes this Bill there will be a revolution in this country", thundered Kadalie. He would go to Parliament himself to sjambok the MPs, he said. Kotane, whose respect for language and for facts made him suspicious of all word-spinners, was unimpressed.

The collapse of the ICU as an all-in trade union of African Workers (combined of course with the fact that after 1926 Communists were excluded from its ranks) speeded up the process already begun by the Communist Party of organising African trade unions on an industrial basis. The Bakers' Union which Kotane joined has already been mentioned. Other unions founded in 1928 included the Clothing Workers' Union, the Cleaners, Dyers and Laundry Workers' Union, the Mattress Workers' Union, The Furniture Workers' Union, Municipal Workers' Union, Dairy Workers' Union, Meat Workers' Union and a few others. The CP initiative was spearheaded by a trade union committee comprising E.S. Sachs, Thibedi, B. Weinbren and W. Kalk, all of whom were active in various sections of the trade union movement. From the outset, the black unions faced problems of integration in the trade union movement as a whole. The white-dominated TUC, though it had a number of party members in its ranks, including Bill Andrews as secretary, was reluctant to co-operate with the black unions on a basis of equality, and a March 22, 1928, meeting of the CP executive came to the conclusion that it was "necessary to set up parallel unions and strive for unity between individual white and black organisations". A few days later on March 25, a meeting was called to form a co-ordinating committee for the black trade union movement. In the chair was Bill Andrews, and the meeting, attended by over 150 delegates, brought into being the Native Federation of Trade Unions (also called the Federation of Native Trade Unions and the S.A. Federation of Non-European Trade Unions) with Weinbren as Chairman and Thibedi as chief organiser. Within a matter of months, the NFTU had an affiliated membership of 10,000. Its success was acknowledged even by the ICU, which in August invited it to attend an anti-pass conference called under its auspices. For its part, the CP executive decided that friendly relations should be maintained with the ICU and that overlapping between the two organisations should be avoided.

Kotane threw himself into trade union and political work with enthusiasm and boundless energy. He was a regular attender at the CP night school, where classes were held under head teacher Charles Baker, E.S. Sachs, Bennie Sachs, E.R. Roux and his wife Winnie, Mrs Wilhelmina Taylor, Eva Green, and other volunteer workers, black and white. In the unions he displayed the qualities of organisation and initiative which marked him out as a future leader. At the second

national conference of the S.A. Federation of Native Trade Unions held in the Inchcape Hall, Johannesburg, on September 1st, 1929, Kotane was elected vice-chairman. Weinbren remained chairman, Thibedi was secretary, E.R. Roux was assistant secretary and W. Taylor treasurer.

Eventually Albert Nzula, who was appointed general secretary of the CP after Wolton left for overseas in 1929, suggested to Kotane that he join the Party. Kotane replied: "Look, I am already a member of two organisations. I have my trade union to fight for better wages and conditions. I belong to my national organisation the ANC which fights for the liberation of the African people. Why must I now join another organisation? What is this political party? What does it do?"

Nzula's explanations did not satisfy him, so Nzula suggested Kotane go with him to a party meeting and listen to the proceedings. Together they went along to 41a Fox Street, where a meeting was in progress under the chairmanship of S.P. Bunting. As they entered the room, Bunting objected to the presence of a stranger (Kotane thought Bunting might have been suspicious he was a police spy). To overcome the dilemma, Baker and Nzula, who knew him well, quickly proposed him for membership of the Party. It was agreed. "You can say I came in by accident", Kotane summed it up later.

The Communist Party that Kotane joined in 1929 was a quite different organisation from the one that had been founded in 1921. Whereas in the early years of the decade Thibedi had been the only African Party member, in the years after the 1924 Party conference more and more Africans were recruited. In his report to the 1928 Comintern conference Bunting had mentioned the difficulties the Party had experienced on the Reef in securing a response from the African population. The Party lacked trained cadres, he said. The Party school "has not yet attracted many advanced natives, and is overmuch occupied in teaching English literacy and communism to a number of very slow and backward illiterates; the most educated ones are attracted more by the ICU and ANC with their prospects of good pay and position". But he went on to stress that the Party still had an edge over its rivals.

"There is no doubt that our Johannesburg group of native members, though backward from the point of view of literacy and experience, is far ahead of any other local body of natives in the matter of honesty, cleanness and understanding of the class struggle". (By cleanness

Bunting was referring to qualities not of hygiene but of character.)

The Party's impact on the African intellectuals was also growing. The sympathetic stand of Gumede, the ANC President, has already been indicated. At the 1930 ANC national conference at which he was stripped of the Presidency, Gumede had made a fighting speech calling on the Africans to reject any attack on the Soviet Union which was "the only real friend of all subject races in the world". He also called on the ANC to organise the people to fight for equal economic, social and political rights, and to use militant methods like strikes, the burning of passes and refusal to pay taxes to "help the struggle for a Black Republic".

Anti-Communists would call Gumede a fellow-traveller, but there were other leading Africans, including many intellectuals, who were to identify themselves wholly with the Party and join its ranks. Many of them were ex-teachers, sacked because of their political activities – among them J.B. Marks, Edwin Mofutsanyana, J. Sepeng, P.G. Moloinjane, Albert Nzula – the last two dismissed from their school after joining the ICU. Others whom Kotane remembers from his first days in the Party were S.M. Kotu, Gana Makabeni, B. Molobi. O. Motuba, W. Nchie, J. Ngedlane, J. Nkosi, Josie Mpama (Palmer), W. Tayi.

Did he think of it as a white party when he joined?

"Not at all", said Kotane. "It was full of Africans. There were branches in the African areas of Johannesburg, Vereeniging, Potchefstroom, Evaton, Bloemfontein. Africans were the overwhelming majority at every meeting. Furthermore, the Party whites were not like other whites. They treated you as equals, and they were themselves punished for the stand they took with us. Their teaching and their practical work convinced us that the Communist Party could help in our liberation. Many of them had been arrested and sent to jail because of their work for the Party. We were always conscious of the fact that for the most part the whites had nothing to gain, only to lose by belonging to the Party".

The salaries of Party workers were low enough in all conscience. The minutes of a Party executive meeting on January 19, 1928, record the decision to pay the Party secretary (Wolton) £15 a month. La Guma as secretary of the S.A. Federation of Native Trade Unions received £6 a month, Thibedi as organiser £4. At a meeting of the executive on September 6, 1928, comrade Kotu reported that £4 a month could be

considered a living wage. The monthly subscription paid by African Party members in 1928 was 6d.

Looking back on his long membership of the Communist Party, Kotane said later: "Some people say there should have been more African people in the leadership. Well, Marxism has no colour. There could always have been more blacks in the leadership but they weren't always there at the conferences to be elected. The leadership of the Party is not just a decoration. The executive is a policy-making body which directs the activity of the membership, and you must choose the best man for the job irrespective of his colour. There have been times when some of the blacks on leading Party bodies were passengers. They were elected because they were black not because they were good Communists, and this was a mistake."

* * *

What chiefly impressed Kotane about the Communist Party was its practical work. Unlike the ANC, the ICU and other bodies appealing to Africans in the political sphere, the Communist Party was not an organisation composed only of leaders who made declarations at annual conferences and were scarcely seen or heard in the interim. The Communist Party demanded regular activity from its members, and from the day he joined, Kotane's spare time, especially at the weekends, was taken up with addressing meetings and selling the *Worker*, the Party paper published in English and some of the African languages. (In 1930 it was renamed *Umsebenzi*, the Zulu word for worker.)

In the issue of the *South African Worker* published on November 30, 1929, what are probably Kotane's first published words appear in the form of a letter headed: "African Workers Criticise the Proposed Riotous Assemblies Act Amendment". Before Parliament at the time was Pirow's Bill providing for the banning of meetings and the deportation of "agitators" who incited against the public peace. In his letter Kotane said:

"There have been countless organisations among the African people in the past and present, but none of them have been attacked and discriminated against like the Communist Party. The Communist Party has just begun to get a footing among the native people and the Government is scared to death already. The new law that they want to

make is nothing but a travesty of justice and an unheard of attack on free speech and rights of combination.

"Fellow Africans it is time you realised your true position and followed the lead of the Communist Party. It is time you renounced the oppressor's yoke and strive for your liberty and freedom. Now is the time of crisis and I appeal to you not to sit supinely and look on while the tyrant disports himself but to act as a united people and test your national strength.

"Follow the lead of the Communist Party that fights."

Day in and day out the Communist Party took up the grievances of the oppressed black peoples of South Africa, exposed the conditions under which they lived and worked, campaigned against the pass laws and other discriminatory legislation, held before the people the prospect of socialism and a better life for all. It organised the workers in trade unions and led them in strikes and demonstrations. Where the workers and the action were, there were to be found the Communists, agitating, exhorting, inspiring, pointing and leading the way forward, black, brown and white South Africans, united by their common struggle and by the vision they shared of the new South Africa they wanted to build, a land without colour bars and exploitation.

The period of Kotane's apprenticeship, 1929 to 1933, coincided with the collapse on Wall Street and the great depression which hit South Africa as hard as any of the other capitalist countries. Unemployment and hardship hit black and white alike, the masses were roused to militant action, and there were times when so great was the distress that colour bars were swept aside and workers of all races marched side by side in the demonstrations of the unemployed through the streets of Johannesburg. For its part the Hertzog government, returned in the 1929 election with a mandate from the white electorate to crush the incipient black rebellion, turned on the people's organisations with a battery of laws and administrative actions which crippled their effectiveness and frightened the more timorous into submission. It was no accident that it was precisely during this period that the Communist Party was riven with doctrinal dissension over the Native Republic issue, and the energies of party members, instead of being concentrated outward in practical action, were often dissipated in fratricidal struggle over the interpretation and application of the Native Republic slogan.

Kotane's early years in the Party were thus marked by intense

conflict both inside and outside the Party. The strains and difficulties drove some to leave the Party at this stage. Some whites active in the trade union movement gave the Party up as a bad job and concentrated on work which was more practicable and personally satisfying. Some middle-class whites simply retired from politics. Some blacks dropped out of the struggle to concentrate on the problem of earning a living; others reacted to increased white oppression with an equally fierce, if sterile, black nationalism.

But the best elements in the Communist Party were toughened and strengthened in the fires of conflict which raged in those days, among them Kotane, Nzula, Mofutsanyana, Marks, Johannes Nkosi. In 1933 Nzula, a commanding personality and impressive orator, was to die of pneumonia at the early age of 28 in Moscow, where he had been sent to study. Johannes Nkosi was to die the death of a martyr at the hands of the police during an anti-pass demonstration in Durban on Dingaan's Day, December 16, 1930. But Mofutsanyana, Kotane and Marks were amongst the leadership of the Communist Party throughout the two decades preceding the dissolution of the CPSA in 1950, and the latter two were to help in the reconstitution of the Party after it had gone underground and remained at its head during the following two decades as well, Marks as national chairman and Kotane as general secretary, a post he held with distinction for over 30 years.

It was men like these who made it possible for the Party to survive repression and internal dissension, who rooted the Party in reality and gave it the mass base necessary to implement the directives embodied in the Native Republic resolution of the Comintern. Nzula, Marks and Mofutsanyana had been teachers, so they came to the Party with some knowledge of language and the concepts which underlay an urban industrialised society. But Kotane's background had been almost entirely tribal; he had little formal schooling and had only just plunged into the vortex of life in Johannesburg, the political and industrial heart of the country. He had to learn, not only the words of the English language, but the ideas that lay behind them. Party slogans bandied about by the old hands were often obscure and remote from the ordinary daily lives of the African people.

"There was a lot of talk about the deepening crisis of capitalism", Kotane recalled in later years. "Some of us didn't understand what a crisis was. When I first heard about a crisis, I thought it meant there was

a famine, and there was no food to eat and no goods in the shops, that people went hungry. I couldn't understand how people who had plenty, as most of the whites seemed to have, should starve.

"I also did not know what a proletarian was, or why it should be good to be a proletarian. We were told that the proletarian had nothing but his labour power. Coming from an independent people, I could not see how someone who had nothing was worthy of respect. I had worked for white farmers, and I could never understand anyone remaining satisfied to spend his life working for such people. In fact I despised them for lacking pride and ambition. To me a man had to be independent and self-sufficient; a man who worked for others appeared to me like a beggar, with no dignity".

Kotane turned 25 in the year 1930. Though a fully grown man, he and his friends did not go drinking or chasing after girls, as most young men are wont to do at that age. In fact, he recalled later that the first glass of beer he tasted was in Berlin at the end of 1932, and he only started smoking in 1936, at the age of 31. Partly it was a question of poverty, which did not conduce to riotous living. Partly it was a question of his tribal and Christian upbringing, which had instilled in him discipline and self-control as well as a set of moral values which never left him, although he lost the last remnants of his faith in god and religion soon after joining the Party. Partly too, he respected the principles of abstemiousness and dedication which he saw displayed by the best elements in the Party, and which he read about in the communist literature that was available at the time. He worked hard and he studied hard.

E.S. Sachs, later secretary of the Garment Workers' Union, who had been one of the teachers at the Party school at 41a Fox Street, recalled later: "Moses Kotane struck me as a clear-thinking and intelligent person even before I started teaching him, before he was fully literate. He worked slowly but very thoroughly, was very clear in his approach to everything he did, understood the problems confronting his people. Never flamboyant, he thought a lot before he spoke about anything, and his opinion was always respected".

Julius Schochat, who was prominent in Party circles in the early thirties and at one stage served on the Johannesburg district committee, said Kotane impressed him with his determination to learn and study so that he could answer the people who tried to dazzle the Party member-

ship with Inprecorr language. (International Press Correspondence was one of the organs of the Comintern, notorious for its stereotyped jargon.) He remembers Kotane sitting in the back room of Mabuza's butchery in Market Street, a regular haunt of his in the city where he could read and study in peace, a dictionary ever at his side. In a few years he had made enormous progress, and was already amongst the leadership of the Party.

"He had character and stubbornness and the capacity to learn from his mistakes. When he spoke you felt his political statements had a basis in reality."

Throughout his political life Kotane sought to unify the ranks of those, both inside and outside the Party, who were opposed to the discriminatory policies of the Government. It was no use having a correct policy, he maintained, unless you had the machinery to carry it out, and he had no time for sectarian activity of any kind either of the right or the left. This was why, in 1929, he helped in the formation of the League of African Rights, together with ANC leader Gumede, S.P. Bunting, A. Nzula, C.D. Modiakgotla and the Rev. N.B. Tantsi. "We were trying to fulfil the united front line", he explained – a line laid down by the CPSA's own conference of 1924 – "that the problems of the working class can only be solved by a United Front of all workers irrespective of colour" – and reaffirmed in the ECCI's resolution on South Africa which urged the CPSA to implement the Native Republic policy by building up "a solid united front of all toilers against capitalism and imperialism". But the Comintern executive – perhaps on the advice of the Wolton section of the CPSA – considered the League of African Rights to be "reformist", an "example of how the Communist Party abandons its independent role". This was a united front not from below but from the top, with the Party tailing behind a mixed bag of non-proletarian and bourgeois elements. An ECCI statement published in *Umsebenzi* noted that by aiming to present a petition to Parliament instead of organising the workers for mass action, "the Party attempted in the manner of the reformists to turn the masses from the revolutionary road". Noting that the slogan of an Independent Native Republic was completely absent from the programme of the League of African Rights, the ECCI advised the Party to take no further part in the work of the League and it was duly dissolved.

This was not the last time in those early years that Kotane was to

face the accusation that in his promotion of united front tactics he was running the risk of a sell-out to the African bourgeoisie. At the time, being new in the Party, he did not question the decision to dissolve the League of African Rights, but looking back on all the arguments of that period, he recalled later:

"They talked about an African bourgeoisie, but looking around the townships and knowing what life was like in the country areas, I found nothing like a bourgeoisie. There were little shopkeepers and traders but they were not a bourgeoisie. They could not own land or any other of the means of production. The stock they kept was pitiful. I never saw one African barber who owned a fraction of what I saw in Issy Diamond's shop. (Issy Diamond was a Party member who ran a one-man barber shop in Johannesburg – a small business by white standards.) An African barber cuts your hair while you sit on a chair in the open air. He has scissors and a comb and that's all. How does he qualify as a member of the bourgeoisie? All these little African businessmen also have to carry passes and are subject to all the apartheid laws. They have absolutely no security, and the Government was always trying to close them down and force them into the factories. The same with the doctors and teachers and priests. Some of them may have had more money that others, but they were all oppressed. Why could we not work with them in the cause of national liberation? Through the League of African Rights we tried to build up a united front with the ANC, the ICU and all other African groups, including the so-called bourgeoisie, who in my opinion were never a bourgeoisie. True, relations with the ANC at this period were uneasy, especially after the return of Gumede from Moscow, when he was attacked by the reactionaries and the chiefs because of his pro-Soviet line and his support of the CP's Native Republic slogan. But we did co-operate with the ICU, even after the Communists were expelled from its ranks. In 1929 and 1930 we conducted a joint anti-pass campaign with the ICU during which we staged some huge meetings and demonstrations. Kadalie ratted at the last minute and denounced the campaign as communist-inspired, but it had tremendous support from the people in many centres."

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At the beginning of 1931 Kotane was taken out of his job at Quinn's Bakery and made the compositor of the Party paper *Umsebenzi*. From that time onwards, he was full-time functionary for whom politics was the breath of life. Few other Communist Party members in South Africa have had a record of unbroken service to the movement even remotely comparable to his. For 40 years he held a unique position at the centre of Party affairs. Other stars rose from time to time and dazzled the firmament with their brilliance, only to fade away again into obscurity or pass over into active opposition. Always, patiently and steadily, Kotane stuck to his last, never losing sight of his objective, ever-reliable, his very presence an assurance of order and stability in the conduct of Party affairs. Essentially a realist, and a man of the people, he always had his finger on the popular pulse. His assent to any course of action was generally accepted by his comrades as a guarantee of its feasibility.

Kotane was not, of course, born with these insights. They were developed by experience. At the time of his first entry into full-time Party life, the air was full of mystifying jargon. Wolton, he wrote later, "spoke a language none of us understood, nor were some of his actions and political theses understood by anyone in South Africa, not even by himself! But he talked, wrote and acted all the same. He expelled others for demanding reasons for the expulsions".

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Kotane considers Wolton went about his Africanisation programme mechanically. It could be recorded after the 1930 conference that 19 out of 23 Central Executive members were Africans; but, said Kotane later, the real power was still exercised by Wolton and Bach. "Most of the Africans were dummies, they never spoke at meetings. They were in the Communist Party because it was against passes and oppression, but they were not theorists. Don't forget, in the early days there were very few Marxist books in circulation. We did what we felt had to be done out of commonsense."

As a party functionary Kotane found life spartan. He was paid nothing, but was supplied with food and slept at the Party office at 41a Fox Street, Johannesburg. He received so much food that he was able to feed other party members who were unemployed and hungry.

"Money was no longer the incentive" he said later. "I was working for the cause".

One of the concrete achievements of the Wolton leadership was to send African cadres out of the country for political training in the Soviet Union. The first to go was Nzula in 1931, followed a month later by Kotane. Over the years many more were to follow – Edwin Mofutsanyana, J.B. Marks, Nikin, Petersen, Betty du Toit and many other comrades of all race groups. It was not easy to get blacks out of South Africa at that time. Asking for a passport was out of the question, though one or two were able to travel overseas ostensibly as the servants of whites. Nzula, Kotane and others were provided with false papers and sent out through Cape Town. Others went through Mozambique, smuggled across the border by car and eventually put on a ship at Lourenco Marques on the first leg of a long and exhausting journey to the fountainhead of the international communist movement in Moscow.

Kotane left South Africa under the name of Kumalo, and was supposed to be a driver, though he couldn't drive. He had very little money and no clothing apart from what he was wearing. It was understood that he would get further supplies of both en route. In London he stayed at a bed and breakfast place in St Martin's Lane, near Trafalgar Square. Every day a man called Percy, from the Communist Party of Great Britain came in to give him money for food, and day by day he awaited the order to move on, but sometimes contact was broken because it was suspected that the house was being watched by the police, so Kotane just stayed in bed and slept. Time dragged. He went to the cinema, walked the streets sight-seeing, sometimes went to bed at night tired out and hungry. But finally the word came through. He was smuggled aboard a ship at Tilbury and stowed away for six days. In his cramped quarters food was brought to him by a little girl, and he read over and over again the newspaper he had brought with him to while away the time. He even read the advertisements and years later could still remember there was an article on birth control.

Eventually the ship berthed at Leningrad, and Kotane walked ashore – passportless. A militiaman took him to the police station – "there was no malice, but we could not understand one another" – and finally a Comintern official rescued him and took him to the October Hotel. For the first time he could walk the streets a free man, and he

took full advantage of his short stay to explore this beautiful city. Later he went on to Moscow, but again had trouble because nobody had been sent to meet him and Nzula had to be summoned to identify him.

But Kotane was not in the Soviet Union as a tourist. In later life he recalled his first impressions – that the traffic was on the right, that public transport was so crowded that passengers could hardly get on or off. People seemed well fed and well dressed. But his main memory was of the Lenin School where he and Nzula studied, and in which he afterwards had the same pride as any member of convocation of his old university. But again, this was study with a difference, to equip Kotane and his comrades with the intellectual weapons of the class war they would have to wage when they got home again.

Nzula and Kotane attended the same classes, and Kotane thought Nzula a brilliant student. Their teachers included Ivan Potekhin, Zusmanowich and the Hungarian Marxist Endre Sik, who later wrote a four-volume *History of Black Africa.* Of Potekhin Kotane said, in an interview reported in the *African Communist* (No.54 Third Quarter 1973):

"I came to know him well both as a man and a talented young scholar. Afterwards I met him many times in Moscow, in Africa and at the Africa Institute where he was Director. We used to have long and very interesting talks and each time he revealed deep understanding of the most complex problems of South Africa, His great scientific contribution consists in the fact that he was one of the first scientists who approached these problems from the Marxist standpoint at a time when bourgeois science dominated in African studies. The creation of a group on African studies in Moscow and the subsequent foundation of the Africa Institute marked the appearance of the Soviet Marxist school of Africanists. Potekhin has also made a great scientific contribution to that development".

The regime at the Lenin school was strict and the curriculum extensive – so extensive that when Kotane was given his first assignments he found he had so many books to read that he wanted to return home forthwith. But his tutors persuaded him to take it slowly and persevere. Kotane – already something of a bookworm – started reading, and soon got used to working steadily under pressure. The syllabus included the history of the labour movement, trade unionism, political economy, the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

historical and dialectical materialism and also some lectures in philosophy – bourgeois and Marxist. By the end of the year Kotane was reading everything he could lay his hands on – except philosophy, for which he had little taste. He was considered one of the best students and did well in his examinations.

"It was at the Lenin School that I learnt how to think politically", he wrote later. "They taught me the logical method of argument, political analysis. From that time onwards I was never at a loss when it came to summing up a situation. I knew what to look for and what had to be done from the point of view of the working class."

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE BONAPARTE OF NAIROBI AND GATUNDU
– Underdevelopment in Kenya: a perspective

Guy Arnold: *Kenyatta and the Politics of Kenya* (J.M. Dent, £4.50) 1974.

Geoff Lamb: *Peasant Politics – Conflict and Development in Murang'a* (Julian Friedmann Publishers, £3.50) 1974.

Colin Leys: *Underdevelopment in Kenya – The Political Economy of Neo-colonialism* (Heinemann, £4.00) 1975.

Kenyatta is one of the most enigmatic figures on the African political scene today. How did the imprisoned, reviled and persecuted enemy of the white settlers and the British of the 1950s become transformed overnight into the 'wise', 'statesmanlike' old ruler of the 1960s and 70s who is so acceptable to British neo-colonialism and to the bourgeois press in Africa and the West? Is his Kikuyu traditionalism incompatible with his role as the father figure of Kenyan nationalism or are they essentially complementary aspects of a conservative bourgeois nationalist?

Above all, how is one to explain the undoubted pre-eminence of Kenyatta in Kenya for the past 15 years? How is one to account for the

long-lived, stable-looking personal dictatorship of *Mzee* (the old man), cloaked initially in the forms of a two-party parliamentary system and more recently in a more presidential-style governmental system in which the ruling party has degenerated into a relatively unimportant prop of the regime and the parliamentary system has become a far more hollow and irrelevant fiction of constitutional power than in most 'liberal' democracies? What is the basis of Kenyatta's power?

Guy Arnold's biography covers all the familiar well-worn ground of Kenyatta's life story without suggesting answers to such questions. Indeed, one feels that it is the book's purpose to avoid posing them, because they compel analysis of Kenyatta's policies, of the developing class structure of Kenya and its political and economic relations with Britain and other imperialist powers. Instead, we are treated to a repetition of the unenlightening cliches of the popular press about Kenyatta – his personal charisma, pragmatism, friendliness (lack of bitterness) towards the British, and so on. Also, since Mr Arnold is a competent liberal apologist for neo-colonial Kenya, there are mixed in with these 'explanations' occasional admissions of the elitist character of Kenya's rulers, references to Kenyatta as a conservative etc. – giving his hymn of praise to Kenyatta the appearance of objectivity and impartiality.

Guy Arnold would probably not see the significance of an analysis of Kenyatta's position in terms of Louis Napoleon's 'Bonapartism' in France in 1850. But this is precisely the reference point of Colin Leys' illuminating discussion of the Kenyan political scene. Or rather, the reference is to Marx's famous characterisation of Bonapartism in "The Eighteenth Brumaire". The relevance is this: Marx showed that at a particular stage in the development of capitalist society. where pre-capitalist modes of production still survive and where none of the major propertied classes (land-owners, industrial or manufacturing bourgeoisie, or the 'middle classes') is sufficiently strong to exercise its domination single-handed, nor the working classes sufficiently developed to challenge effectively the power of the propertied classes, the state acquires a relative autonomy, and apparently greater power rests in the sole ruler because of his role as an arbiter between the finely balanced classes, as well as his role as their agent.

The government, in such an essentially transitional but possibly protracted stage of development, characteristically acts in highly

contradictory ways, simultaneously building up the economic and political power of the middle classes, but also curbing it in the course of entrenching the ultimately superior power of the bourgeoisie proper. It also woos the support of the working masses of both town and country with an inflated populist rhetoric ('African socialism', 'rural development' etc.) while at the same time emasculating the growing movement of these exploited classes – by incorporating and restricting the trade unions, by harassing and isolating the political opposition, and when these methods prove insufficient, by outright suppression of dissent and radicalism.

One of the most important socio-economic changes in Kenya in the past twenty years has been the creation of a substantial class of small peasants with freehold tenure producing not only food for their own subsistence but also cash crops for export – coffee, tea, sisal etc. The creation of this class was the consistent aim of the late colonial rulers, and it has been faithfully carried out by the KANU leadership, presided over by Kenyatta. Marx, in one of many illuminating passages quoted by Leys, shows how this social basis lends itself to and supports the type of governmental system and state apparatus so characteristic not only of Kenya but of many, if not all, of the African states which have taken the path of neo-colonialism:

> "By its very nature, small-holding property forms a suitable basis for an all-powerful and innumerable bureaucracy. It creates a uniform level of relationships and persons over the whole surface of the land. Hence it also permits of uniform action from a supreme centre on all points of this uniform mass . . .
> "Finally, it produces an unemployed surplus population for which there is no place either on the land or in the towns, and which accordingly reaches out for state offices as a sort of respectable alms, and provokes the creation of state posts."

(To illustrate this last point concretely: between 1965 and 1969 the number of people directly employed by the Kenya government rose from 85,000 to 109,000, an annual increase of over 6 per cent. Seven years after independence, the public sector accounted for 40 per cent of all persons in recorded wage/salaried employment.)

Of course, the principal difference between France in 1850 and Kenya in 1970 is that the dominant capitalist power in Kenya is based

outside the country, in those places where resides the economic and political power of the great international monopolies which own or otherwise control the commanding heights of the Kenyan economy. Their direct agents in the country are the managers of the local subsidiaries – the local face (increasingly black not white) of international capital. And they are buttressed by the agents of 'aid' and technical assistance, who are of great significance not so much by reason of their numbers (3,600 expatriate technical assistance personnel in 1971) but because they are strategically placed in the key centres of the machinery of government. Leys cites figures showing that at least one thousand of these 'assistants' were employed in the four main spending ministries – health, education, agriculture and works. And of these, a surprising number were located in the crucial policy-making ministries: 33 in Finance & Planning, 58 in Home Affairs, 24 in the legal and judicial · departments, 15 in Commerce & Industry, 6 in the President's Office, and so on. This level of Western penetration of government is matched on the military side by the British dominance in the arming and training of the army, and influence in the security apparatus.

The concentration of power in the single ruler results inevitably in a degeneration of the institutions of democratic government (especially parliament) and the means of mass mobilisation (the ruling party, general elections). Leys points out that even the cabinet has become unimportant in Kenya, meeting infrequently. The real centre of political power is Kenyatta's court, based partly at his country home at Gatundu near Nairobi, but also travelling with him to the capital. The inner circle consists of a handful of Kikuyu politicians who have long been associates of *Mzee*. To the court come a steady stream of delegations – regional, district, tribal, special interest groups etc. – seeking favours and advantage, singing the praises of the President and bringing him presents. Even major ministries can be and are overridden by the President. Small wonder then that under this modern African Bonaparte the mass of the people feel as remote and alien from the governmental processes as they did under colonialism.

Although the analysis of Bonapartism as a guide to the class basis and character of the Kenyan state may be a novel and helpful approach for many Marxists, the foreign domination of the state apparatus is a visible and therefore familiar feature of capitalist-oriented countries in

Africa. What has been too little examined is the process of class formation which underlies states of this sort. This is a much more challenging task for all who seek to understand the real character of social and political forces and the prospects for African countries to break out of their dependence on the West and steer a course of independent development leading ultimately to socialism. The challenge exists on two planes: theoretical, where Marxists must grasp deeply the full range of concepts developed by Marx, Engels, Lenin and others to understand the stages and processes of capitalist development; and practical, or concrete, that is looking at social classes, especially the peasantry, as they actually exist in various countries. Too much abstract and sweeping theorising about class formation in Africa has plagued left-wing circles in the past decade.

It is in this context that one can extend a welcome to Geoff Lamb's study of peasant politics in the Murang'a district of Kenya. Murang'a is a part of Central Province, the fertile highlands near the capital Nairobi, peopled almost entirely by Kikuyu peasants, nearly half a million in number, exporting coffee and producing a variety of other agricultural products. The region is well-chosen to demonstrate a number of themes of wider significance in Kenya's politics: Kikuyu pre-eminence, and the internal strains upon it created by the growth of competitive and contradictory class interests; the land resettlement policy and its consequences for production, marketing, incomes, and other aspects of class formation; the emergence in the early 1960s of radical opposition trends around the figure of one of Oginga Odinga's closest allies, Bildad Kaggia, and the ways in which they were soon isolated and defeated; and closely linked with this, the continuation into the politics of independence, in differing forms, of the bitter struggle that occurred at the time of Mau Mau between the landless militants and the wealthier peasants who sided with the British colonialists and served in the anti-Mau Mau 'home guard'.

Lamb's book is written with great academic professionalism, efficiently conveying a great deal of carefully sifted and organised factual material which is of the utmost interest for anybody seeking concrete data about the social bases of African politics. On the other hand, the narrowness of its scope both geographically and historically (the author hardly mentions developments since 1971, and mostly restricts himself to data collected in 1967) greatly restricts the work's interest for the

non-academic reader.

The author could have compensated for this by analysing his data in a thoroughly materialist way, posing the problem of classes, their formation and relationships. But although he is obviously aware of the need for this kind of analysis, and indeed approaches it tentatively in his conclusions, he has not tackled it directly, pleading lack of adequate evidence – an explanation which Colin Leys criticises in his foreword to the book.

Leys' own book is a much more wide-ranging work, seeking to analyse the transition of Kenya from colonial rule to neo-colonial dependence. It is also academic, but transcends the conventions of this context and raises questions of great theoretical importance for African revolutionaries. In picking out earlier some of the political aspects of the analysis I have run the risk of giving a false impression of the scope of the book. It in fact is only secondarily concerned with the predominantly political aspects of independent Kenya. By far the bulk of it deals with land, the growth of various classes, their relations to each other, to the state, and to the external capitalist forces which dominate both over and through what Leys tends to call the (growing indigenous) 'auxiliary' bourgeoisie. (For a clear outline of Kenya's emergent class structure see the article "Kenya Faces Crisis of Neo-Colonialism" by Muhoi wa Kirinyaga in the last issue of *The African Communist*, No.61, 1975). If I now proceed to make some fundamental criticisms of Leys' ideas, I hope it will not deter the interested reader from obtaining this book.

THEORY OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT

Leys analyses neo-colonialism in Kenya with the aid of – and very much under the influence of – contemporary under-development theory. Briefly, this is a line of analysis evolved principally by Paul Baran, Andre Gunder Frank (in relation to Latin America), Arrighi and Saul (in relation to Africa), and a handful of New Left writers dealing with Third World issues. Space does not allow for a proper critique, or even a full statement of this school's ideas. But it stresses the impossibility of independent capitalist growth in the ex-colonial countries, and the ways in which (despite their enormous variety of levels of development)

they are all 'locked into' (a favourite term) relations of dependence and further exploitation – by their terms of trade, by the multi-nationals' control of key sectors of their economies, by the inevitably comprador character of the dominant social classes in these countries, etc. The message for all peoples suffering from the consequent 'development of underdevelopment' is rather a bleak one: they must break out of their deepening subordination to imperialism by a leap into socialist revolution – even though the very process of underdevelopment prevents the growth of the social class which is the main force for achieving socialism – the proletariat.

In my view, while this neo-Marxist perspective offers much insight into the modes of domination and exploitation typical of neo-colonialism, it is fatally defective on several major theoretical grounds. It usually uses (as Leys does) an a-historical and unscientific concept of surplus – defined by Baran as the difference between current output and current consumption in a given society. So defined, every society since primitive communism has generated a surplus. This concept is no substitute, therefore, for the much more precise Marxist concept of surplus value, which explains the essential mechanism of exploitation characteristic of the capitalist mode of production.

Secondly, underdevelopment theory lacks any conception of an alternative path of development for the new states of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Its mechanical 'locking in' of these countries into a strait-jacket of dependence is one-sided and undialectical. No opposite line of development is offered, save for the brave but hopeless leap into socialism – a socialism which is seldom defined and looks like an egalitarian, agrarian utopia (the socialism of peasant poverty, in reality) rather than an industrialised socialism of plenty built under the leadership of the working class.

NON-CAPITALIST PATH

The Marxist-Leninist approach recognises that it is possible in certain conditions for ex-colonial countries to reduce and ultimately eliminate their dependence on the metropolitan imperialist powers, to escape the clutches of neo-colonialism, build an economy based on relations of cooperation rather than exploitation, and so by stages effect a transition

to socialism by taking the non-capitalist path. This is precisely the present path of Kenya's neighbour Tanzania, and the growing tension between the two countries cannot be understood without grasping the basic fact of there being alternative and irreconcilable paths of development. Under-development theorists, though regarding themselves as Marxists, see Tanzania as a country trying to build socialism – a petit-bourgeois misconception which they share with that nation's leaders. To aim at socialism, to nationalise the banks and foreign trade, curb the power of foreign capital, and promote cooperation in agriculture, is to take the non-capitalist path – but it is not yet the construction of socialism.

One of the major consequences of Leys' adoption of the under-development approach is that he gives no sign of any possible alternative line of change for Kenya. Indeed, by the terms of his analysis, none can exist. He therefore does not even pose the question whether there may be a national bourgeoisie in Kenya (loosely speaking, that is a propertied class with an interest in political independence to secure its interests as a class. It might be, for example, the smaller free-holding peasants oppressed by the wealthier, large-scale farmers and their subservience to the monopoly exporters and purchasers of farm produce). As far as Leys can see, the bourgeoisie is only an auxiliary one, or comprador in character. (I am not clear whether he regards these two concepts as inter-changeable). Closely linked with this are two other errors, one on the economic side, the other on the political. Leys tends to counter-pose the capitalist mode of production and a peasant mode of production. Now while it is good to see a former orthodox liberal recognising the co-existence of different modes of production in an African country (and employing Marxist concepts in so doing), one must reject as unscientific any confusion on this score. Capitalism can and does develop in agriculture, and it is important to establish clearly what levels of capitalist development have been reached by various peasant sub-classes, and their degree of subordination to higher forms of capital. What is meant by a peasant or an industrial mode of production must be defined more precisely in class terms.

On the political side, Leys gives a very harsh and unsympathetic account of the radical opposition in Kenya. He dismisses the ideas of Oginga Odinga, Bildad Kaggia and others as 'petit bourgeois socialism' – which they undoubtedly were. But the ideology of petit bourgeois

socialism is capable of developing into scientific socialism provided that the ideas of the latter are brought to bear on it. The nations of the ex-colonial world which are struggling to break out of imperialism's grip are by and large doing so under petit bourgeois leadership which has hoisted the flag of socialism – and they are doing so with the support of the revolutionary working class both internationally and internally (to the extent that it exists there, which, as everybody knows, is in most cases rather slight). For Leys to imply that the failure of the radical opposition in Kenya was largely due to its own ideological weaknesses and tactical mistakes runs counter to his own account of the growth and encouragement by the British colonialists of powerful class forces hostile to socialism, even of the petit bourgeois variety.

ALBERT TSHUME

CULTURAL ISOLATION

The Conservationist by Nadine Gordimer, published by Jonathan Cape, £2.75.

Nadine Gordimer has already won two awards with her latest novel, the Booker Award in the United Kingdom and the CNA award in South Africa. It is a novel of exquisite craftsmanship, at least insofar as the use of language is concerned. The sentences flow melodiously, many passages are strikingly evocative of the South African scene. One can almost breathe the dry, crisp air of the Transvaal highveld; the winter grass sparkles with frost.

On the farm "the road has ruts and incised patterns from the rains of seasons long past, petrified, more like striations made over millenia in rock than marks of wheels, boots and hooves in live earth. There was no rain this summer but even in a drought year the vlei provides some moisture on this farm and the third pasture has patches where a skin of greenish wet has glazed, dried, lifted, cracked, each irregular segment curling at the edges. The farmer's steps bite down on them with the crispness of biscuits between teeth. The river's too low to be seen or heard: as the slope quickens his pace through momentum, there is a whiff in the dry air (the way the breath of clover came). A whiff – the

laundry smell of soap scum. The river's there, somewhere, all right."

The conservationist is a tycoon turned weekend farmer, preoccupied not only with conserving the land and its fruits, but also his way of life and his personality from invasion of any kind, either by the unseen horde of blacks who live on the other side of the fence separating the location from the road along which he drives to his farm, or by the woman who has shared his bed. He has an external bonhomie, but a cold heart.

In fact none of Nadine Gordimer's characters seem to possess the allotted quota of blood which should flow in their veins. They are remote and anaemic, going through the motions of living and loving without ecstasy or even involvement. The conservationist Mehring spends one whole night on a transcontinental plane engaged in an orgy of what the textbooks call heavy petting with a young woman whom he has never met before and who is sharing with him the cover of a blanket to ward off the cold. With clinical precision Nadine Gordimer describes every sensuous detail of Mehring's assault and conquest of the unresisting stranger, but the whole exchange between them is conducted without either feeling or passion, even without lust. In the morning they separate without a word.

The African servants on the farm, too, are stereotypes from a black and white minstrel show. One can give them orders and receive service; they can be faithful and dishonest at the same time. They are amusing, even touching, but one can have no communion with them. They are not real people.

Nadine Gordimer's characters are not the men and women we know in South Africa, and her South Africa is not the country we know either. Where is the excitement and the conflict, the courage and loyalty, the ferment and the fury, the dynamic which makes South Africa the fascination of friend and foe alike? Where is the savagery which led to Sharpeville? The defiance of 1952? The challenge of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the blind rage of Poqo? The cruelty of the police interrogator?

Perhaps Nadine Gordimer intended to convey the notion of people, black and white, emotionally crippled by apartheid. But perhaps she, too, may be one of the victims. In an address to a seminar at York University, England, last April, she showed signs of awareness of this problem.

Even if he successfully shoots the rapids of banning or exile, any

writer's attempt to present in South Africa a totality of human experience is subverted before he sets down a word, she said.

"As a white man his fortune may change – the one thing he cannot experience is blackness. As a black man the one thing he cannot experience is whiteness. There is no social mobility across the colour line", she said.

The black writer wrote from the 'inside' about the experience of the black masses because the colour bar kept him steeped in his circumstances.

"Confined in a black township, and carrying a pass that regulates his movements from the day he is born with the status of 'piccanin' to the day he is buried in a segregated cemetery.

"The white writer, aseptically quarantined in his test-tube elite existence, is cut off by enforced privilege from the greater part of the society in which he lives – the life of the proletariat, the 19 million whose potential of experience he does not share from the day he is born 'baas' to the day he is buried in his segregated cemetery".

The result, she said, was extreme limitations in the presentation of characters by writers of other racial groups.

All this is true, but it is not the whole story. The colour bar did not shackle an Olive Schreiner, who wrote with a passion and commitment which has not been equalled in South African literature since her pen was stilled. It is not because Nadine Gordimer does not know enough but because she does not feel enough that her novel resembles a statue carved from ice – an accurate but chilled representation of the narrow world she inhabits.

PETER MACKINTOSH

Letters to the Editor

RESISTING FASCIST INTERROGATION

I read with interest Hugh Lewin's *Bandiet*, already reviewed in your columns. I should like to make certain comments about a trend in his writing.

It is, to my knowledge, probably the outstanding work thus far produced on prison life for white male South African 'politicals', covering various stages from arrest and interrogation to the everyday monotony and irritations for great patriots (like the now-dying Bram Fischer and Denis Goldberg, both sentenced for life). It is to be hoped that similar work will be penned on the plight of our white and black women as well as the many, many heroes on the Island.

Such work is invaluable, in my view, not merely for increasing our knowledge, but because it deals with matters which figure in the thinking of all revolutionaries and potential recruits to our struggle. Most of us who have not experienced jail read works such as these not only for their intrinsic interest (eg the warm accounts of the comradeship inside jail, the insight into the personalities of many people whom most of us never had the opportunity to meet), but also for what they teach about resisting the methods of interrogation prior to jailing, modes

of dealing with police and prison officials' attempts at breaking morale etc.

It is significant that Hugh Lewin, formerly Liberal Party and African Resistance Movement,* dedicates his book to many nameless political prisoners, but that he specifically mentions Bram Fischer and Jock Strachan – surprising when their politics are compared to his previous political stance. Lewin also gives us a broadly generous portrait of many loyal members of the movement. Yet I fear that perhaps traces of individualism, defeatism and other attitudes foreign to revolutionary thinking lead him to approach the problem of interrogation in a manner that might hinder our work, should this book be widely read. (It is not I believe, legally available in South Africa, though many of us have read it.)

Our movement, as I understand it, cannot afford the luxury of counting on all comrades refusing to assist the enemy or revealing important matters when under the pressure of fascist interrogation. Yet we do our work in a manner that we hope will ensure that our comrades will never talk or assist the enemy in any way. (I am not suggesting that *all* talking assists – one finds this strain in a play by Sartre where the mere fact of refusing to talk is made a matter of principle. What we are concerned with is that the movement is not betrayed. It is possible that the detainee may evolve tactics, including *innocuous talking* which helps him to avert disaster). We try to build up the consciousness of our comrades in a way that will make their convictions unshakeable, despite solitary confinement, statue treatment, electric shocks and other police brutality and humiliation.

That is why so few of our people did assist the police in the early sixties. That is why Bram Fischer said in his speech from the dock that he would never turn traitor against his comrades (just as many of his Communist comrades were sent to jail for refusing to testify against him). That is why Julius Fucik in an unforgettable passage in his *Report from the Gallows* speaks of one of his ex-comrades expelling himself from the collective, from the great army of liberation, by his decision to talk and to talk extensively: ". . . To think that this had been a fellow with guts, who had not been scared by bullets . . . Now he

* A.R.M. – a small, predominantly white movement, mainly of intellectuals, which committed acts of sabotage aimed at bringing white South Africa 'to its senses' and as a catalyst towards change.

had paled before the rod in the hands of the Gestapo and ratted to save his own skin. How superficial was his courage if a few blows could rub it away. As superficial as his convictions. He had been strong in a crowd when surrounded by comrades who thought as he did. He had been strong because he had thought of them. Now, isolated, alone, hard-pressed by the enemy, he had lost his strength entirely. He had lost everything because he began to think of himself. To save his own skin he had sacrificed his comrades. He had given way to cowardice and out of cowardice had turned traitor.

"He did not say that it was better to die than to decipher the material they found on him. He deciphered it. He gave them names. He gave them the address of an underground flat. He brought Gestapo agents to a meeting . . . He told them all.

"A coward loses more than his own life. He has lost. He has deserted a glorious army and earned the contempt of the foulest of enemies. And even alive – he no longer lived; because he had expelled himself from the collective . . ." (My emphasis)

Lewin, to his credit, did not betray any of his comrades, but he never stops to reflect (in the book) on certain 'received truths' about experiences under interrogation. He quotes Diane, one of his former ARM comrades, as saying: "Everybody talks in the end" (See pp.26, 30).

A POLITICAL TEST

Perhaps Lewin should have clarified his present attitude to this practical ideological matter. Interrogation is not merely a traumatic experience, it is also a political text as explained so clearly by Fucik in the quotation above. Either the detainee believes he must not assist the police since what he knows is so precious, being part of a much wider thing than his temporary tortures; or he has cause to talk because what he says is not so important; or finally he talks because the pressures brought to bear on him seem sufficiently severe for him to betray the historical movement of which he had hitherto been a part. In the case of our movement, even where a comrade faces torture to the death (as has happened on many occasions) he knows that the struggle continues.

Being part of a smaller, less clearly defined group than ours, Lewin

could not have felt quite as our comrades feel. A passage (pp.29-30) reveals clearly the difficulties of and differences in resistance in his situation as opposed to ours. Where we stand as part of a national and international movement, Lewin, betrayed by one colleague only, felt alone in the world. He therefore writes:

"It was then, I think – a couple of hours before dawn – that I knew I was going to break. When Leftwich told them the identity of Tom and Eric, then I realised I would talk. For the first time I felt *he* had betrayed *me*: to talk was nothing, *everybody* talked, but *he* had tried to trick *me*, tried to make me seem responsible for giving away Tom and Eric . . . *I felt tricked. I was cornered with nowhere to turn. How could I hold out any longer?* I was tired, too tired to feel anger now, too tired to care, too tired to think of anything except the effort of not falling down in a daze of pain stretching across my back and shoulders – with a faint light beginning to play on the curtain opposite, lighting the window before the dawn.

"I knew I would crack then. *Diane had been right. Everybody talks in the end.* Swanepoel's picnic basket, the loneliness of the rook on the top floor, the telexes – I couldn't hold out against them, not now with Leftwich against me too. *There was nobody left in the world but them and me . . . Nobody else in the world.*" (My emphasis)

The object of this quotation is not to impute any lack of courage to Lewin, but to indicate the relationship between his actions and the movement in which he had operated. He was, in a sense, more isolated politically, not merely separated from his comrades, as was Fucik's traitor. But his experience cannot be generalised. It cannot lead us to conclude that our position, if we are detained, would be similar – even if one of our comrades had turned traitor. *One suffers or dies for the overall mass of our people, not just for personal loyalty.* It is this which must be clearly understood; there is a differing relationship between workers in splinter groups united largely only by personal loyalty, and the relationship of members of a party bound by a wider loyalty to their cause and their people. Where a Communist or Congressite assists the police, he attacks the movements of the people. Similarly, where tortured even unto death he draws comfort from the knowledge of the people's support. This is well conveyed by Henri Alleg (in *The Question*) who suffered abominable tortures for the Algerian liberation cause. Near the end of his account he writes:

". . . I would often pass Arab prisoners in the corridor, on the way back to their collective dungeon or cell. Some of them knew me from having seen me at political rallies organised by the paper; others only knew my name. I was always naked to the waist, still marked by the bruises I had received, my chest and hands covered with bandages. They understood that, like themselves I had been tortured and they greeted me in the passage: 'Have courage, brother!' In their eyes I read a solidarity, a friendship, and such complete trust that I felt proud, particularly because I was a European, to be among them." (p.92)

THEY DIED FOR FREEDOM

As for the men who were murdered in their liberation struggle, their place in the hearts of their comrades has seldom been so adequately conveyed.

"It is only a few days since the blood of three young Algerians had joined that of the Algerian Fernand and Yveton in the courtyard of the prison. In the immense cry of pain which sprang from the prisoners in all the cells at the moment when the executioner went to get the condemned, as in the absolute silence which followed it, the soul of Algeria vibrated. Its tears, shining in the darkness, fell across the bars of my cell. All the shutters had been closed by the guards, but we were able to hear one of the condemned cry out before he was gagged: 'Tahia El Djezair! Vive l'Algerie!' And with a single voice, at no doubt the very moment when the first of the three mounted the scaffold, the anthem of free Algeria rose from the women's section of the prison.

"Out of our struggle
Rise the voices of free men:
For our country.
I give you everything I love,
I give you my life,
O my country . . . O my country." (pp.95-96)

(See also Karl Marx's conclusion to the *Civil War in France* where he writes a stirring eulogy to the martyrs of the Paris Commune of 1870).

The question that the politically disciplined individual, under interrogation, will ask himself is: 'Why should I aid these fascist swine?

What is there that should lead me to betray my comrades who are close friends, but are also far more than that?' It is true that there are inducements, especially to be set free – for a life not worth living. *The committed individual has no choice. He cannot cooperate.* We must train our cadres in this spirit, and abhor fatalistic statements about the inevitability of 'talking'. No less strongly must we combat the idea of our being helpless in the situation, which is what Lewin implies. After talking he writes:

"They had taken me from my world, cut me off from anything that could prop me up as part of my world, and made me a part of their world. I felt too scared, too alone, too ashamed to fight the change. I was now part of their world and there was *nothing I could do to change that*. It was easier to do nothing, not to worry, easier to accept that all was finished, easier to feel uninvolved and dependent – numb, cold like the winter outside." (My emphasis)

It is instructive, in contrast, to note the reflections of our young, brave American comrade, Angela Davis, recently in a similar situation to Lewin. In *An Autobiography* (1974) she writes:

"My frustration was immense. But before my thoughts led me further in the direction of self-pity, I brought them to a halt, reminding myself that this was precisely what solitary confinement was supposed to evoke. In such a state the keepers could control their victim. I would not let them conquer me. I transformed my frustration into raging energy for the fight."

Finally, the man whose life must be one of the great examples in the struggle against fascism and human exploitation, Georgi Dimitrov, writing during the Reichstag frame-up:

"What I had to endure in German prisons was a perfected form of inquisition, refined barbarity. The instructions given from above by the examining magistrate were extremely severe. They wanted to break us physically and morally. For five months, from April 3 to August 31, my hands were manacled day and night . . . The sufferings from this shackling beggar description. I believe that a death sentence is not as painful as manacles.

"*A Bolshevik revolutionary has no right to die, he must live and fight under all circumstances. He who lives with this thought in mind can stand the worst tortures. And you must not only stand it, but also try and make the best of the time in prison, even if manacled. You never*

know beforehand, whether the twelfth hour may not be the hour of freedom. One should be prepared for the eventuality, so as to start the new struggle not as an invalid, but with steeled forces. I firmly adopted this attitude from the very start." (My emphasis)

This should surely be our attitude! Since Lewin has shown himself sympathetic to the liberation struggle, he will, I trust, interpret these comments not as criticism designed to belittle his generally valuable book, but for the benefit of those who may still have to endure experiences similar to those that he describes.

Florence Modisane

(While we agree with much that our correspondent has to say, particularly her stress on the importance of ideological commitment, we nevertheless feel that she has tended to oversimplify what is a very complex question. For example, there have been cases of isolated individuals acting alone who have withstood every form of torture. There have also been cases of individuals who have belonged to and been supported by revolutionary organisations who have nevertheless capitulated to the interrogator. We invite our readers to contribute their thoughts on this subject. – *Ed.*)

NEOCOLONIALISM IN AFRICA

The favourable review of my book *US Neocolonialism in Africa* by Comrade Cox in your First Quarter 1975 issue is greatly appreciated. Nevertheless, two points at least, I feel, deserve brief comments:

1. The *reviewer* says: "Nor can I accept the view that independence was attained in tropical Africa 'without preparatory steps being taken by Britain.'" And then he goes on to elaborate. Unfortunately, he omitted one word from his citation.

The *book*: "But this was done *not* without preparatory steps being taken by Britain, which made her the first major colonial power in Africa to embark broadly on a neocolonialist course" (emphasis added, p.25).

2. The *reviewer* speaks of: "an important gap in the book by Stewart Smith, that of exploitation by trade and the widening gap between what independent African states get for their exports and what they pay for their imports."

The *book* devotes a chapter to Trade – Short Term Flows and Long-Term Patterns (pp.91-108). It is shown that "the flows of US trade with Africa in the 60s and 70s, although based on the classical economic patterns of obtaining cheap and needed raw materials, the broadening of markets, and the consequent derivation of profits, are much more involved." (pp.91-2).

Without going into the related categories of investment and aid (which the book does in detail), how are the problems posed in the field of trade?

The book's emphasis is on class and national "bargaining strength (economic, political and military) and as a result (relations in the capitalist world) are reflected in detrimental price instability, worsened terms of trade, and dependence" (p.100). Remember how sudden "fluctuations" in raw material prices (cocoa – Ghana, copper – Chile) – not necessarily long-term worsened terms of trade – have been employed against progressive governments. The author did not place main emphasis on the export/import price ratio changes in recent years, for they represent only a part of an exploitation relationship inherited from the imperialist colonial period. Thus, it is understandable why the underdeveloped countries in recent trade conferences have advanced priority demands for stable prices, ensured markets and one-way trade preferences.

The fact that worsened terms of trade, however significant, are only the tip of the iceberg of exploitation, which is closely linked with foreign investment and ownership of means of production, is foreshadowed in the book's analysis of various raw materials, eg. oil (written in July 1972):

"Such new-found economic and technical strength of the Afro-Arab states, which in no small part also was a corollary of the overall military, political and diplomatic support provided by the Socialist world, enabled them for the first time to launch a concentrated offensive against the monopolies, to raise the price and gain control of their most valuable natural resource" (p.233).

The past two years have more than demonstrated the huge river of

profits which have been concealed in the colonial legacy and continued under neocolonialism, plus the other currents of ever new manoeuvres. Note, for instance, how US currency devaluation, demonetization of gold and the export of inflation is now employed to undermine or siphon off the gains won through increased prices.

Hence, it is not surprising that the national liberation movement is growing increasingly conscious of the fact that it is the entire system of imperialist oppression, exploitation and discrimination which must be overcome. That is what the book is all about.

Again my appreciation to your excellent journal and Comrade Cox, and my best wishes for your continued success.

Stewart Smith, Moscow

DICTATORSHIP IN BRAZIL

The military fascist dictatorship which has been ruling Brazil for 11 years in the climate of continuous persecution and violence, and a threat to peace and democratic regimes in Latin America, has of late stepped up its repressions against the workers and the whole people and resumed its unbridled anti-communist campaign.

This is primarily due to the fact that the over-publicized "Brazilian miracle" – relative high rates of growth of production since 1968, based on super-exploitation of the working class and the whole people and the plunder of national wealth by foreign monopolies, mostly American, and by national monopolies – is now faced by serious and growing financial and economic difficulties. In 1974 inflation in Brazil amounted to 35 per cent, the foreign debt reached 18,000 million dollars and the deficit of the country's trade balance, 5,000 million dollars.

This 'miraculous' model of the Brazilian economic development supported by arms and intensive demagogical propaganda was denounced, and the people expressed their protest in many different forms. In 1974 the number of strikes doubled, during which the working people demanded higher wages and better working conditions. The Brazilian peasants are also struggling actively for their rights and for agrarian reform. The intellectuals are exposing the arbitrary rule of the

regime and demanding an end to censorship at nationwide meetings. The students are struggling against the 'cultural terror' which has been installed in schools and universities. The Catholic Church is protesting most strongly against tortures, illegal arrests and imprisonment and defending human dignity. Public figures are demanding the restoration of legality.

This wave of generalised protest arose especially during the elections in November 1974 to the National Congress, an organ with very limited powers which was relegated to second place by the fascists. Despite the fact that the selection of candidates was severely restricted, despite direct and indirect menaces, numerous arrests, murders, repressions and provocations, the opposition won over 60 per cent of the votes. One may state that in the largest industrial and urban centres, this percentage was up to 80 and 90 per cent. The Brazilian Communist Party which called on the people to use the election as an instrument of protest, played an important role during the election campaign. It helped to create conditions for the growth of a broad anti-fascist patriotic front so as to isolate and defeat the military-police regime.

In the conditions of the massive rebuff to the regime by the people, the small group of gorilla generals which had seized power stepped up its terror and persecutions against democratic leaders, especially members and leaders of the Brazilian Communist Party. On December 6, 1974, wide military and police operations were conducted in the biggest cities of the country; in January 1975 two printing offices were destroyed, in which *Voz Operaris*, the Central Organ of the Brazilian Communist Party, had been printed, and more than one hundred persons were arrested, among them a member of the Central Committee of the BCP Marco Antonio Coelho, and also Comrades Elson Costa and Raimundo Alves de Souza and many other democrats and patriots.

Under popular discontent and public pressure, the dictatorship had to submit an explanation in public. Armando Falcae, the fascist Minister of 'justice', made a statement on the national TV and broadcasting network, trying to justify the broad wave of reprisals against democratic forces. At the same time he was forced to admit the BCP's important role in the victory of the opposition. This speech showed the real content of the policy of so-called 'gradual democratization' and was a blow to the illusions about the 'liberalizing' tendencies of dictator Geisel.

As a result of pressure, both domestic and international, the dictatorship later published a cynical statement in which it tried to evade the question concerning the whereabouts of several dozen anti-fascist fighters, including five members of the BCP, who had been abducted almost a year before by the military repressive authorities. This official statement did not explain anything but on the contrary made more evident, for public opinion, the undoubted responsibility of the dictatorship for the lives of the prisoners who were probably killed.

The movement to save and release political prisoners is intensifying in Brazil in many different forms. Federal MPs signed a petition on establishing a parliamentary investigation commission which is to investigate the whereabouts of the persons who had disappeared. The National Conference of Bishops of Brazil declared that it was in favour of a general amnesty. Aliemar Baleeire, the former Chairman on the Federal Supreme Court, denounced the crimes committed in Brazil against human rights: illegal imprisonment, tortures, kidnapping and suppression of freedom of thought.

The Brazilian people and the BCP value highly the recent actions of the fraternal Communist parties and important international organizations and persons which have raised their voice of protest against the arbitrary rule of the dictatorship, especially the action of the World Federation of Trade Unions which called on Pope Paul VI and UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim to speak out in defence of people whose life is in danger, and, jointly with other organizations, sent a cable to dictator Geisel demanding an end of the new wave of violence against the workers and the people.

International solidarity, thanks to which it was possible to liberate many revolutionaries in various countries, is especially valuable at this moment, which is so difficult for the Communist Party and the Brazilian people. It will help to save the lives of Comrades David Capistrano, Jose Massena Mello, Walter Ribeiro, Luis Maranhao, Jose Roman, other arrested fighters and to liberate Comrades Marco Antonio Coelho, Elson Costa, Raimundo Alves de Souza and many other democrats and patriots.

Luiz Carlos Prestes
Secretary General, Communist Party of Brazil

VORSTER'S ARMY IS NOT INVINCIBLE, INDIVISIBLE OR IMPENETRABLE

The Editorial Notes in *The African Communist*, No.60, ranging over many aspects of the new situation in Southern Africa following the democratic revolution in Portugal, touched on two aspects of the role of the army in South Africa. I would like to comment on these aspects.

(1) In the context of a comparison between the anti-colonial struggles of the peoples of the former Portuguese territories, and the anti-colonial, anti-racist struggle of the South African people (against a *resident* enemy), the editorial notes say: "The South African equivalent of Lisbon is Pretoria. We have no Armed Forces Movement and do not expect one." (p.17)

What precisely does it mean to say that we do not expect an equivalent of the AFM in South Africa? If it means that the destruction of the system of white racial domination can only come from the armed and political strength of the oppressed masses, not from within the white army which is itself a vital element in the maintenance of white supremacy, then one must agree with the idea expressed. It would be dangerously misleading to encourage the notion that a democratic revolution could be, so to speak, led from the top, by white officers – on a false analogy with the 25 April coup in Portugal. Such an idea could only serve to disarm the oppressed masses who must develop their own fighting strength into an irresistible force.

But the passage quoted is open to another interpretation which must be objected to. It could be thought to mean that we do not expect the armed forces of the oppressor to be any other than a monolithic reactionary force. But it is bound to contain within itself elements which – while they will not stand firmly on the side of the ANC and its allies – will not want to sacrifice their lives fighting to maintain an unjust system. Such people can *and must be* neutralised – and their number is bound to grow as the intensity of the conflict mounts.

Because such considerations are of much wider validity than just the South African situation, the Third Communist International – under Lenin's guidance – at its inception laid down as one of the 21 conditions of membership for fraternal parties the obligation to struggle within the armed forces of the class enemy. In South Africa this

obligation to neutralise wavering elements in the white army is especially important for the following reasons.

(a) the standing (ie. professional) army of the SA government is relatively small. The regime relies for military manpower on white civilians drawn into the army as temporary conscripts. Divide the conscripts and you go a long way towards weakening an armed force which appears numerically strong in relation to the revolutionary forces that are likely to be ranged against it in the foreseeable future.

(b) the struggle to neutralise whites in the army is part of the wider struggle to strengthen the democratic forces within the white community. These forces are not and never will be a major force for change. But the united front of democratic forces which the liberation movement builds round itself cannot afford to neglect them.

In conclusion, one need only refer to the intense controversy sparked off within the SA Council of Churches and its constituent bodies by the Hammanskraal resolutions last year, defending the right of conscientious objection for all (white) conscripts, to realise the struggle to neutralise sections of the army is already begun. The fact that the issue was so widely debated at a time when the white servicemen have not yet been thrown into fierce and bloody battle, indicates that when the battle does hot up and affects young whites more directly, the scope for effective intervention by revolutionaries, guided by these perspectives, will be considerable.

(2) The second point can be dealt with more briefly. The same editorial notes (p.10) present the measures taken by the South African government to recruit Africans, Coloureds and Indians into the SA Defence Force as a response to the manpower shortage of the army. This needs to be qualified, in my view.

The actual number of blacks drawn into the enemy's armed forces is quite small so far – barely enough to provide a couple of battalions. On the other hand the military manpower shortage of the regime in South Africa, unlike its Rhodesian counterpart, is potential rather than actual as of now. It is a foreseeable problem of the future, not a pressing problem of today. This indicates that the desire to recruit blacks is dictated more by political considerations than by logistic needs. Black forces in uniform are needed not to swell the ranks of an army that is far from fully deployed – as yet. They are needed in the same way that the Bantustan puppets are needed, black mayors are

needed, and so on – as agents of apartheid within the community of the oppressed, to help sow division and confusion, and to put a black mask on the face of white supremacy.

It is because these are the enemy's aims that the liberation movement must urge upon the oppressed people the greatest vigilance against the enemy's tactics. No black man should don the uniform of his oppressors, or take up arms against the people. Arms must be taken up *for* the people, not against them.

J. Villiers

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